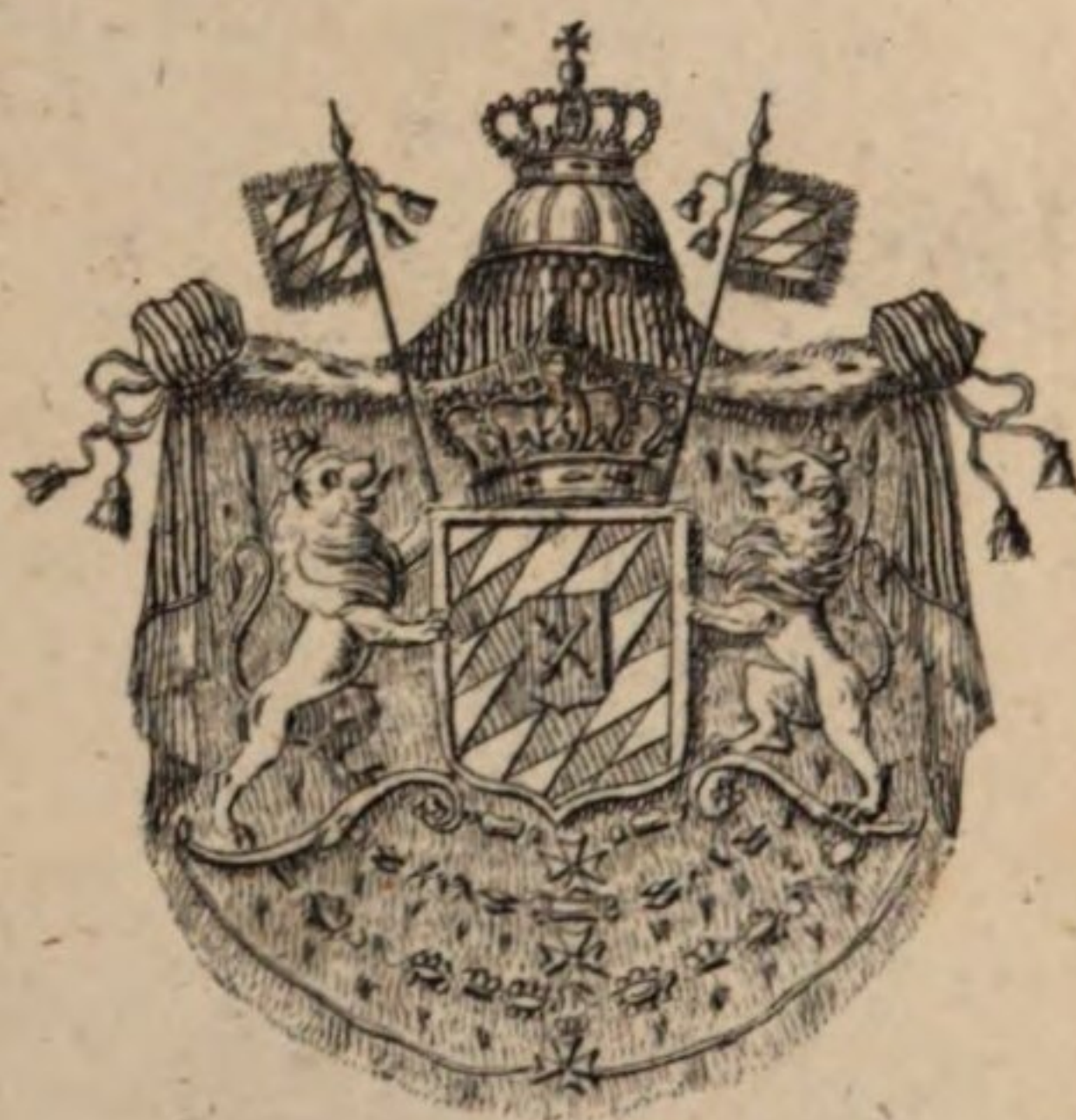




L. O. Angl. Prior

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THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
MATTHEW PRIOR.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

WITH
THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.
VOL. II.

Cooke's Edition.

Here's no rude ore ; no fits of heat and cold ;
Here all is nature, yet all's beaten gold ;
No forc'd mysterious soarings in the clouds ;
No mud, no foam, no noise, in your deep floods,
With such true spirit your great numbers run,
As lightning bold, but equal as the sun :
Gentle tho' strong ; and high, yet still in sight ;
Rapid, yet pure ; and easy as the light.

Verses to Prior.

EMBELLISHED WITH SUPERB ENGRAVINGS.

London :

Printed for C. COOKE, No. 17, Paternoster-Row,
By J. Wright, No. 20, Denmark-Court ;
And sold by all the Booksellers in the United
Kingdom.

POLITICAL WORKS

OF

MATTHEW PRIOR

IN TWO VOLUMES

AND

THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR

BY H. H.

EDWARD D. DENTON
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
AND

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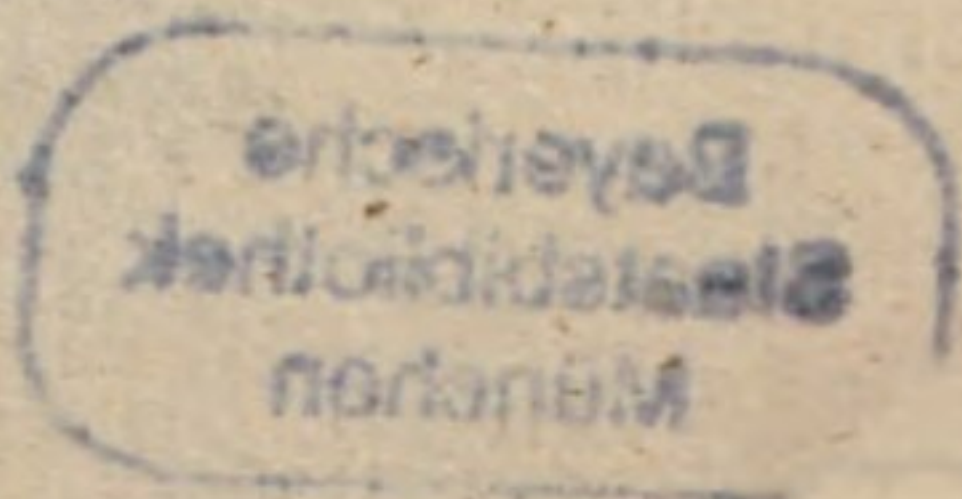
THE DOVE,	ALMA,
SOLOMON ON THE VANITY	THE NUT-BROWN MAID
OF THE WORLD,	HENRY AND EMMA,

&c. &c. &c.

Ye Sons of Men, with just regard attend,
Observe the Preacher, and believe the Friend,
Whose serious MUSE inspires him to explain
That all we act, and all we think is vain.

Solomon, Book I.

London:
PRINTED AND EMBELLISHED
Under the Direction of
C. COCKE.



**Bayerische
Staatsbibliothek
München**

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

THE DOVE.

Tantaene animis coelestibus irae? Virg.

IN Virgil's sacred verse we find
That passion can depress or raise
The heav'nly as the human mind;
Who dare deny what Virgil says?

4

II.

But if they should, what our great master
Has thus laid down my tale shall prove;
Fair Venus wept the sad disaster
Of having lost her fav'rite dove.

8

III.

In complaisance poor Cupid mourn'd;
His grief reliev'd his mother's pain;
He vow'd he'd leave no stone unturn'd
But she should have her Dove again.

12

IV.

Tho' none, said he, shall yet be nam'd,
I know the felon well enough:
But be she not Mamma condemn'd
Without a fair and legal proof.

16

V.

With that his longest dart he took,
As constable would take his staff;
That gods desire like men to look
Would make ev'n Heraclitus laugh.

20

VI.

Love's subaltern, a duteous band,
Like watchmen round their chief appear;
Each had his lantern in his hand,
And Venus mask'd brought up the rear.

24

VII.

Accouter'd thus, their eager step
To Cloe's lodging they directed;
(At once I write, alas! and weep,
That Cloe is of theft suspected.)

28

VIII.

Late they fet out, had far to go :
 St. Dunstan's as they pass'd struck one.
 Cloe for reasons good, you know,
 Lives at the sober end o'th' Town.

32

IX.

With one great peal they rap the door,
 Like footmen on a visiting day.
 Folks at her house at such an hour !
 Lord ! what will all the neighbours say ?

36

X.

The door is open : up they run ;
 Nor pray'rs nor threats divert their speed :
 Thieves ! thieves ! cries Susan ; we're undone ;
 They'll kill my mistress in her bed.

40

XI.

In bed indeed the nymph had been
 Three hours ; for all historians say
 She commonly went up at ten,
 Unless Piquet was in the way.

44

XII.

She wak'd, be sure, with strange surprise.
 O Cupid, is this right or law,
 Thus to disturb the brightest eyes
 That ever slept or ever saw ?

48

XIII.

Have you observ'd a sitting hare,
 List'ning and fearful of the storm
 Of horns and hounds, clap back her ear,
 Afraid to keep or leave her form ?

52

XIV.

Or have you mark'd a partridge quake,
 Viewing the tower'ing falcon nigh ?
 She cuddles low behind the brake,
 Nor would she stay nor dare she fly.

56

XV.

Then have you seen the beauteous maid,
 When, gazing on her midnight foes,
 She turn'd each way her frightened head,
 Then sunk it deep beneath the clothes.

60

XVI.

Venus this while was in the chamber
Incognito ; for Susan said
 It smelt so strong of myrrh and amber—
 And Susan is no lying maid.

64

XVII.

But since we have no present need
 Of Venus for an episode,
 With Cupid let us e'en proceed,
 And thus to Cloe spoke the god :

68

XVIII.

Hold up your head, hold up your hand ;
 Would it were not my lot to shew ye
 This cruel writ, wherein you stand
 Indicted by the name of Cloe :

72

XIX.

For that by secret malice stirr'd,
 Or by an em'lous pride invited,
 You have purloin'd the fav'rite bird
 In which my mother most delighted.

76

XX.

Her blushing face the lovely maid
 Rais'd just above the milk-white sheet,
 A rose-tree in a lily-bed
 Nor glows so red nor breathes so sweet.

80

XXI.

Are you not he whom virgins fear
 And widows court ? Is not your name
 Cupid ? If so pray come not near—
 Fair maiden, I'm the very same.

84

XXII.

Then what have I, good Sir, to say
 Or do with her you call your mother ?
 If I should meet her in my way
 We hardly curt'sy to each other.

88

XXIII.

Diana chaste and Hebe sweet
 Witness that what I speak is true ;
 I would not give my paroquet
 For all the doves that ever flew.

92

XXIV.

Yet, to compose this midnight noise,
Go freely search where'er you please;
(The rage that rais'd adorn'd her voice)
Upon yon' toilet lie my keys.

96

XXV.

Her keys he takes, her doors unlocks,
Thro' wardrobe and thro' closet bounces,
Peeps into ev'ry chest and box,
Turns all her furbelows and flounces.

100

XXVI.

But Dove, depend on't, finds he none,
So to the bed returns again;
And now the maiden, bolder grown,
Begins to treat him with disdain.

104

XXVII.

I marvel much, she smiling said,
Your poultry cannot yet be found:
Lies he in yonder slipper dead,
Or may be in the teapot drown'd?

108

XXVIII.

No traitor, angry Love replies,
He's hid somewhere about your breast;
A place nor god nor man denies
For Venus' Dove the proper nest.

112

XXIX.

Search then, she said; put in your hand,
And Cynthia, dear protectress, guard me,
As guilty I or free may stand
Do thou or punish or reward me.

116

XXX.

But, ah! what maid to Love can trust?
He scorns and breaks all legal pow'r;
Into her breast his hand he thrust,
And in a moment forc'd it lower.

120

XXXI.

O, whither do those fingers rove,
Cries Cloe, treacherous urchin, whither?
O Venus! I shall find thy Dove,
Says he, for sure I touch his feather.

2



CUPID IN SEARCH OF VENUS'S DOVE.

O! whither do those fingers rove,
Cries Chloe, treacherous urchin, whither?
O Venus! I shall find thy Dove,
Says he for sure I touch his feather.

Prior's Poems. Vide Vol. II. Page 8. line 12.

Designed by J. Thurston Engraved by G. Armstrong
Printed for C. Cooke. May 1801

ERLE ROBERT'S MICE.

IN CHAUCER'S STYLE.

TWAY Mice, full blythe and amicable,
 Baten beside Erle Robert's table,
 Lies there ne trap their necks to catch,
 Ne old black cat their steps to watch,
 Their fill they eat of fowl and fish;
 Feast-lyche as heart of Mouſe mote wiſh.

5

As gueſts fat Jovial at the board,
 Forth leap'd our Mice; eſtſoons the Lord
 Of Boling, whilom John the Saint,
 Who maketh oft' propos full queint,
 Laugh'd jocund, and aloud he cry'd,
 To Matthew ſeated on th' oth' ſide,
 To thee, lean Bard, it doth pertain
 To underſtand theſe creatures tweine:
 Come frame us now ſome clean device,
 Or playſant rhyme on yonder Mice;
 They ſeem, God ſhield me, Matt. and Charles.

10

15

Bad as Sir Topas or Squire Quarles
 (Matthew did for the nonce reply)
 At emblem or device am I;
 But could I chaunt or rhyme, pardie,
 Clear as Dan Chaucer or as thee,
 Ne verſe from me (ſo God me ſhrive)
 On mouſe or other beaſt alive.

20

Certes I have this many days
 Sent myne poetic herd to graze.
 Ne armed knight ydrad in war
 With lyon fierce will I compare;
 Ne judge-unjuſt with furred fox,
 Harming in ſecret guiſe the flockſ;
 Ne prieſt unworth of goddeſſes coat,
 To ſwine ydrunk or filthy ſtoat;
 Elke ſimile farewell for aye,
 From elephant, I trow, to flea.

25

30

Reply'd the friendlike peer I weene
Matthew is angred on the spleen.

35

Ne so, quoth Matt. ne shall be e'er,
With wit that falleth all so fair :

Eftsoons well weet ye my intent
Boweth to your commaundement.

40

If by these creatures ye have seen,
Pourtrayed Charles and Matthew been,
Behoveth neet to wreck my brain,
The rest in order to explain.

That cupboard where the Mice disport
I liken to St. Stephen's court ;

45

Therein is space enough, I trow,
For elke comrade to come and goe ;

And therein eke may both be fed
With shiver of the wheaten bred :

50

And when as these mine eyen survey
They cease to skip, and squeak, and play,
Return they may to diff'rent cells,
Auditing one whilst th' other tells.

Dear Robert, quoth the Saint, whose mind
In bounteous deed no mean can bind,

55

Now as I hope to grow devout
I deem this matter well made out,

Laugh I whilst thus I serious pray ?

Let that be wrought which Matt. doth say ;

Yea, quoth the Erle, but not to-day.

61

IN THE SAME STYLE.

FULL oft' doth Matt. with Topaz dine,
Eateth bak'd meats, drinketh Greek wine ;
But Topas his own worke rehearseth,
And Matt. mote praise what Topaz verseth.
Now shure as priest did e'er shrive sinner,
Full hardly earneth Matt. his dinner.

6

IN THE SAME STYLE.

FAIR Susan did her wif-hede well menteine,
 Algates assaulted fore by letchours tweine;
 Now, and I read aright that auncient song,
 Olde were the paramours, the dame full yong. 4

Had thilke fame tale in other guise been tolde;
 Had they been young (pardie) and she been olde,
 That, by St. Kit, had wrought much forer tryal,
 Full merveillous, I wote, were swilk denyal.

TO FORTUNE.

WHILST I in prifon or in court look down,
 Nor beg thy favour nor deserve thy frown
 In vain malicious Fortune haft thou try'd,
 By taking from my ftate to quell my pride:
 Infulting girl, thy present rage abate,
 And would'ft thou have me humbled, make me great.

TO CLOE.

WHILST I am fcorch'd with hot defire,
 In vain cold friendship you return;
 Your drops of pity on my fire,
 Alas! but make it fiercer burn. 4

II.

Ah! would you have the flame fuppreft,
 That kills the heart it heats too faft,
 Take half my paffion to your breaft,
 The reft in mine fhall ever laft. 8

TO CLOE WEEPING.

SEE, whilst thou weep'ft, fair Cloe, fee
 The world in fympathy with thee:
 The cheerful birds no longer fmg,
 Each droops his head, and hangs his wing.
 The clouds have bent their bofom lower,
 And fhed their fonnrows in a fhow. 5

The brooks beyond their limits flow,
 And louder murmurs speak their woe,
 The nymphs and swains adopt thy cares;
 They heave thy sighs and weep thy tears.
 Fantastic nymph! that grief should move
 Thy heart obdurate against love.
 Strange tears! whose pow'r can soften all
 But that dear breast on which they fall.

10

14

CLOE HUNTING.

BEHIND her neck her comely tresses ty'd,
 Her iv'ry quiver graceful by her side,
 A-hunting Cloe went; she lost her way,
 And thro' the woods uncertain chanc'd to stray.
 Apollo, passing by, beheld the maid;
 And, Sister dear, bright Cynthia, turn, he said;
 The hunted hind lies close in yonder break.
 Loud Cupid laugh'd to see the god's mistake;
 And, laughing, cry'd, Learn better, great divine,
 To know thy kindred, and to honour mine.
 Rightly advis'd, far hence thy sister seek,
 Or on Meander's bank or Latmus' peak;
 But in this nymph, my friend, my sister know,
 She draws my arrows, and she bends my bow:
 Fair Thames she haunts, and ev'ry neighb'ring grove,
 Sacred to soft recess and gentle love.
 Go, with thy Cynthia hurl the pointed spear
 At the rough boar, or chase the flying deer:
 I and my Cloe take a nobler aim;
 At human hearts we fling, nor ever miss the game.

5

10

16

20

CLOE JEALOUS.

FORBEAR to ask me why I weep,
 Vext Cloe to her shepherd said;
 'Tis for my two poor straggling sheep,
 Perhaps, or for my squirrel dead.

4

II.

For mind I what you late have writ?
 Your subtle questions and replies?

Emblems to teach a female wit

The ways where changing Cupid flies ?

8

III.

Your riddle purpos'd to rehearse

The gen'ral pow'r that beauty has,

But why did no peculiar verse

Describe one charm of Cloe's face ?

12

IV.

The glass which was at Venus' shrine

With such mysterious sorrow laid,

The garland (and you call it mine)

Which show'd how youth and beauty fade.

16

V.

Ten thousand trifles light as these

Nor can my rage nor anger move ;

She should be humble who would please

And she must suffer who can love.

20

VI.

When in my glass I chanc'd to look,

Of Venus what did I implore ?

That ev'ry grace which thence I took

Should know to charm my Damon more.

24

VII.

Reading thy verse, Who heeds, said I,

If here or there his glances flew ?

O, free for ever be his eye

Whose heart to me is always true.

28

VIII.

My bloom, indeed, my little flow'r

Of beauty, quickly lost its pride ;

For, sever'd from its native bow'r

It on thy glowing bosom dy'd.

32

IX.

Yet car'd I not what might presage

Or withering wreath or fleeting youth ;

Love I esteem'd more strong than age,

And time less permanent than truth.

36

X.

Why then I weep forbear to know ;
 Fall uncontroll'd, my tears, and free ;
 O Damon ! 'tis the only woe
 I ever yet conceal'd from thee.

40

XI.

The secret wound with which I bleed
 Shall lie wrapt up e'en in my hearse,
 But on my tombstone thou shalt read
 My answer to thy dubious verse.

44

ANSWER TO CLOE JEALOUS.

IN THE SAME STYLE.

The Author sick.

YES, fairest proof of beauty's pow'r,
 Dear idol of my panting heart,
 Nature points this my fatal hour,
 And I have liv'd, and we must part.

4

II.

While now I take my last adieu,
 Heave thou no sigh, nor shed a tear,
 Lest yet my half-clos'd eye may view
 On earth an object worth its care.

8

III.

From Jealousy's tormenting strife
 For ever be thy bosom freed,
 That nothing may disturb thy life,
 Content I hasten to the dead.

12

IV.

Yet when some better-fated youth
 Shall with his am'rous parley move thee,
 Reflect one moment on his truth
 Who dying thus persists to love thee.

16

A BETTER ANSWER.

DEAR Cloe, how blubber'd is that pretty face ?
 Thy cheek all on fire, and thy hair all uncurl'd :
 Pr'ythee quit this caprice ; and (as old Falstaff says)
 Let us e'en talk a little like folks of this world.

4

II.

How canst thou presume thou hast leave to destroy
 The beauties which Venus but lent to thy keeping?
 Those looks were design'd to inspire love and joy;
 More ord'nary eyes may serve people for weeping. 8

III.

To be vex'd at a trifle or two that I writ,
 Your judgment at once and my passion you wrong;
 You take that for fact which can scarce be found wit:
 Odd's life I must one swear to the truth of a song? 12

IV.

What I speak, my fair Cloe, and what I write, shews
 The diff'rence there is betwixt nature and art;
 I court others in verse, but I love thee in prose;
 And they have my whimsies, but thou hast my heart.

V.

The god of us versemen (you know child) the Sun,
 How after his journey he set up his rest;
 If at morning o'er earth 'tis his fancy to run,
 At night he reclines on his Thetis's breast. 20

VI.

So when I am weary'd with wand'ring all day,
 To thee my delight in the ev'ning I come;
 No matter what beauties I saw in my way,
 They were but my visits, but thou art my home. 24

VII.

Then finish, dear Cloe, this pastoral war,
 And let us like Horace and Lydia agree;
 For thou art a girl as much brighter than her,
 As he was a poet sublimer than me. 28

VENUS MISTAKEN.

WHEN Cloe's picture was to Venus shown,
 Surpris'd, the goddess took it for her own;
 And what, said she, does this bold painter mean?
 When was I bathing thus, and naked seen! 4

II.

Pleas'd Cupid heard, and check'd his mother's pride;
 And who's blind now, Mamma? the urchin cry'd.

'Tis Cloe's eye, and cheek, and lip, and breast :
Friend Howard's genius fancy'd all the rest.

8

VENUS' ADVICE TO THE MUSES.

THUS to the Muses spoke the Cyprian Dame,
Adorn my altars, and revere my name.
My son shall else assume his potent darts ;
Twang goes the bow ; my girls have at your hearts.
The Muses answer'd Venus, We deride
The Vagrant's malice and his mother's pride :
Send him to nymphs who sleep on Ida's shade,
To the loose dance and wanton masquerade :
Our thoughts are settled, and intent our look
On the instructive verse and moral book.
On female idleness his pow'r relies,
But when he finds us studying hard he flies.

6

12

THE JUDGMENT OF VENUS.

WHEN Kneller's works, of various grace,
Were to fair Venus shown,
The goddess spy'd in ev'ry face
Some features of her own.

4

II.

Just so, (and pointing with her hand)
So shone, says she, my eyes,
When from two goddesses I gain'd
An apple for a prize.

8

III.

When in the glass and river too
My face I lately view'd,
Such was I, if the glass be true,
If true the crystal flood.

12

IV.

In colours of this glorious kind
Apelles painted me ;
My hair, thus flowing with the wind
Sprung from my native sea.

16

V.

Like this disorder'd, wild, forlorn,
Big with ten thousand fears,
Thee, my Adonis, did I mourn
E'en beautiful in tears.

20

VI.

But viewing Myra plac'd apart,
I fear, says she, I fear,
Apelles, that Sir Godfrey's art
Has far surpass'd thine here :

24

VII.

Or I, a goddess of the skies,
By Mary am undone,
And must resign to her the prize
The apple, which I won.

28

VIII.

But soon as she had Myra seen,
Majestically fair,
The sparkling eye, the look serene,
The gay and easy air.

32

IX.

With fiery emulation fill'd
The wond'ring goddess cry'd,
Apelles must to Kneller yield,
Or Venus must to Hyde.

36

PHILLIS' AGE.

HOW old may Phillis be, you ask,
Whose beauty thus all hearts engages?
To answer is no easy task,
For she has really two ages.

4

Stiff in brocade, and pinch'd in stays,
Her patches, paint, and jewels on,
All day let Envy view her face,
And Phillis is but twenty-one.

8

Paint, patches, jewels, laid aside,
At night, astronomers agree
The ev'ning has the day bely'd,
And Phillis is some forty-three.

12

CHASTE FLORIMEL.

NO—I'll endure ten thousand deaths
Ere any further I'll comply :
Oh ! Sir, no man on earth that breathes
Had ever yet his hand so high.

4

II

Oh ! take your sword and pierce my heart,
Undaunted see me meet the wound ;
Oh ! will you act a Tarquin's part ?
A second Lucrece you have found.

8

III.

Thus to the pressing Corydon
Poor Florimel, unhappy maid,
Fearing by love to be undone,
In broken dying accents said ;

12

IV.

Delia who held the conscious door,
Inspir'd by truth and brandy, smil'd,
Knowing that sixteen months before
Our Lucrece had her second child.

16

V.

And hark ye, Madam, cry'd the bawd,
None of your flights, your high-rope dodging ;
Be civil here, or march abroad ;
Oblige the 'squire, or quit the lodging.

20

VI.

Oh ! have I, Florimel went on,
Have I then lost my Delia's aid ?
Where shall forsaken virtue un
If by her friend she is betray'd ?

24

VII.

Oh ! curse on empty friendship's name ;
Lord what is all our future view ?

Then, dear destroyer of my fame,
Let my last succour be to you.

28

VIII.

From Delia's rage and Fortune's frown
A wretched lovesick maid deliver;
Oh! tip me but another crown,
Dear Sir, and make me your's for ever.

32

THE QUESTION. TO LISETTA.

WHAT nymph should I admire or trust
But Cloe, beauteous Cloe, just?
What nymph should I desire to see
But her who leaves the plain for me?
To whom should I compose the lay,
But her who listens when I play?
To whom in song repeat my cares
But her who in my sorrow shares?
For whom should I the garland make
But her who joys the gift to take,
And boasts she wears it for my sake?
In love am I not fully blest?
Lisetta, pr'ythee, tell the rest.

5

10

13

LISETTA'S REPLY.

SURE Cloe just, and Cloe fair,
Deserves to be your only care;
But when you and she to-day
Far into the wood did stray,
And I happen'd to pass by,
Which way did you cast your eye?
But when your cares to her you sing,
Yet dare not tell her whence they spring,
Does it not more afflict your heart
That in those cares she bears a part?
When you the flow'rs for Cloe twine,
Why do you to her garland join
The meanest bud that falls from mine?
Simplest of swains! the world may see
Whom Cloe loves, and who loves me.

5

10

15

CUPID AND GANYMEDE.

IN heav'n, one holyday, you read,
 In wise Anacreon, Ganymede
 Drew heedless Cupid in to throw
 A main, to pass an hour, or so:
 The little Trojan, by the way, 5
 By Hermes taught, play'd all the play.
 The god, unhappily engag'd,
 By nature rash, by play enrag'd,
 Complain'd and sigh'd, and cry'd, and fretted,
 Lost ev'ry earthly thing he betted; 10
 In ready money all the store
 Pick'd up long since from Danae's show'r;
 A snuff-box set with bleeding hearts,
 Rubies, all pierc'd with diamond darts;
 His ninepins made of myrtle wood; 15
 (The tree in Ida's forest stood)
 His bowl pure gold, the very same
 Which Paris gave the Cyprian dame;
 Two table books in shagreen covers,
 Fill'd with good verse from real lovers, 20
 Merchandize rare! a billet-doux,
 Its matter passionate, yet true;
 Heaps of hair rings and cipher'd seals,
 Rich trifles, serious bagatelles.
 What sad disorders play begets! 25
 Desp'rate and mad, at length he sets
 Those darts, whose points make gods adore
 His might, and deprecate his pow'r;
 Those darts whence all our joy and pain
 Arise; those darts—Come seven's the main, 30
 Cries Ganymede: the usual trick,
 Seven slur a six: eleven: a nick.
 Ill news go fast: 'twas quickly known,
 That simple Cupid was undone.
 Swifter than lightning Venus flew; 35
 Too late she found the thing too true.

Guess how the goddess greets her son :

Come hither Sirrah : no, begone ;

And hark ye, is it so indeed ?

A comrade you for Ganymede ?

40

An imp as wicked for his age

As any earthly lady's page ;

A scandal and a scourge to Troy,

A prince's son ? A blackguard boy ;

A sharper that with box and dice

45

Draws in young deities to vice.

All heaven is by the ears together

Since first that little rogue came hither :

Juno herself has had no peace,

And truly I've been favour'd less :

50

For Jove, as Fame reports, (but Fame

Says things not fit for me to name)

Has acted ill for such a god,

And taken ways extremely odd.

And thou, unhappy Child, she said,

55

(Her anger by her grief allay'd)

Unhappy child, who thus hast lost

All the estate we e'er could boast,

Whither, O whither wilt thou run,

Thy name despis'd, thy weakness known ?

60

Nor shall thy shrine on earth be crown'd

Nor shall thy pow'r in heav'n be own'd.

When thou nor man nor god canst wound.

Obedient Cupid, kneeling cry'd,

Cease, dearest Mother, cease to chide ;

65

Gany's a cheat, and I'm a bubble ;

Yet why this great excess of trouble ?

The dice were false ; the darts are gone ;

Yet how are you or I undone ?

The loss of these I can supply

70

With keener shafts from Cloe's eye :

Fear not we e'er can be disgrac'd

While that bright magazine shall last :

Your crowded altars still shall smoke,

And man your friendly aid invoke ;

75

Jove shall again revere your pow'r,
And rise a swan or fall a show'r.

77

CUPID MISTAKEN.

AS after noon one summer's day
Venus stood bathing in a river,
Cupid a-shooting went that way,
New strung his bow, new fill'd his quiver.

4

II.

With skill he chose his sharpest dart ;
With all his might his bow he drew,
Swift to his beauteous parent's heart
The too well guided arrow flew.

8

III.

I faint! I die! the goddess cry'd:
O cruel, couldst thou find none other
To wreak thy spleen on? Parricide!
Like Nero thou hast slain thy mother.

12

IV.

Poor Cupid, sobbing, scarce could speak ;
Indeed, Mamma, I did not know ye :
Alas! how easy my mistake?
I took you for your likeness Cloe.

16

CUPID IN AMBUSH.

IT oft' to many has successful been
Upon his arm to let his mistress lean,
Or with her airy fan to cool her heat,
Or gently squeeze her knees, or press her feet.
All public sports to favour young desire,
With opportunities like this conspire.
E'en where his skill the gladiator shows,
With human blood where the Arena flows,
There oftentimes Love's quiver-bearing boy
Prepares his bow and arrows to destroy ;
While the spectator gazes on the fight,
And sees 'em wound each other with delight ;

5

10



Designed by Thomas Stothard. Engraved by J. Smith.

CUPID TURNED PLOUGHMAN.
Like any ploughman toild the little God,
His time he whistled and his wheate he sowed
Then sat and laugh'd, and to the skies above
Raising his eye he thus imilted Love.
Vide Prior, Vol. II. Page 23.
Printed for C. Cooke. Aug. 27. 1702.

While he his pretty mistress entertains,
 And wagers with her who the conquest gains,
 Slyly the god takes aim, and hits his heart,
 And in the wounds he sees he bears his part. . 16

CUPID TURNED PLOUGHMAN.

FROM MOSCHUS.

HIS lamp, his bow, and quiver laid aside,
 A rustic wallet o'er his shoulders ty'd,
 Sly Cupid, always on new mischief bent,
 To the rich field and furrow'd tillage went;
 Like any ploughman toil'd the little god, 5
 His tune he whistled, and his wheat he sow'd;
 Then sat and laugh'd, and to the skies above
 Raising his eye, he thus insulted Jove:
 Lay by your hail, your hurtful storms restrain,
 And as I bid you let it shine or rain, 10
 Else you again beneath my yoke shall bow,
 Feel the sharp goad, and draw the servile plough;
 What once Europa was Nannette is now. 13

CUPID TURNED STROLLER.

FROM ANACREON.

AT dead of night, when stars appear,
 And strong Boötes turns the Bear,
 When mortals sleep their cares away,
 Fatigu'd with labours of the day,
 Cupid was knocking at my gate; 5
 Who's there, says I? who knocks so late,
 Disturbs my dreams, and breaks my rest?
 O fear not me, a harmless guest,
 He said; but open, open pray;
 A foolish child, I've lost my way, 10
 And wander here this moonlight night,
 All wet and cold, and wanting light.
 With due regard his voice I heard,
 Then rose, a ready lamp prepar'd,

And saw a naked boy below, 15
 With wings, a quiver, and a bow :
 In haste I ran, unlock'd my gate,
 Secure and thoughtless of my fate ;
 I set the child an easy chair
 Against the fire, and dry'd his hair ; 20
 Brought friendly cups of cheerful wine,
 And warm'd his little hands with mine.
 All this did I with kind intent ;
 But he, on wanton mischief bent,
 Said, dearest Friend, this bow you see, 25
 This pretty bow, belongs to me :
 Observe, I pray, if all be right,
 I fear the rain has spoil'd it quite :
 He drew it then, and straight I found
 Within my breast a secret wound. 30
 This done, the rogue no longer staid,
 But leapt away, and laughing said,
 Kind host adieu, we now must part,
 Safe is my bow, but sick thy heart. 34

MERCURY AND CUPID.

IN sullen humour, one day, Jove
 Sent Hermes down to Ida's grove,
 Commanding Cupid to deliver
 His store of darts, his total quiver,
 That Hermes should the weapons break, 5
 Or throw 'em into Lethe's lake.

Hermes you know must do his errand ;
 He found his man, produc'd his warrant :
 Cupid, your darts—this very hour—
 There's no contending against pow'r. 10

How sullen Jupiter, just now
 I think I said, and you'll allow
 That Cupid was as bad as he ;
 Hear but the youngster's repartee.

Come, kinsman, (said the little god) 15
 Put off your wings, lay by your rod,



Designed by J. Thorne Engraved by W. Waite for C. Cooke Apr 25 1803

All this I did with kind intent,
But he on wanton mischief bent,
Said, dearest friend, this bow you see,
This pretty bow, belongs to me.
Prior. Vide Vol. II. Page 24.

Retire with me to yonder bow'r,
 And rest yourself for half an hour ;
 'Tis far indeed from hence to heaven,
 And you fly fast, and 'tis but seven :
 We'll take one cooling cup of Nectar,
 And drink to this celestial Hector.— 20

He break my darts, or hurt my pow'r !
 He, Leda's swan, and Danae's show'r !
 Go bid him his wife's tongue restrain,
 And mind his thunder and his rain.— 25

My darts ! O, certainly I'll give 'em ;
 From Cloe's eyes he shall receive 'em ;
 There's one, the best in all my quiver,
 Twang ! thro' his very heart and liver ; 30

He then shall pine, and sigh, and rave ;
 Good Lord ! what bustle shall we have !
 Neptune must strait be sent to sea,
 And Flora summon'd twice a-day :

One must find shells, and th' other flow'rs, 35
 For cooling grots and fragrant bow'rs,

That Cloe may be serv'd in state,
 The Hours must at her toilette wait ;
 Whilst all the reas'ning fools below
 Wonder their watches go too slow. 40

Lybs must fly south and Eurus east,
 For jewels for her hair and breast ;

No matter tho' their cruel haste
 Sink cities and lay forests waste ;

No matter tho' this fleet be lost, 45
 Or that lie wind-bound on the coast.

What whisp'ring in my mother's ear !
 What care that Juno should not hear !

What work among you scholar gods !
 Phoebus must write him am'rous odes, 50

And thou, poor cousin, must compose
 His letters in submissive prose ;

Whilst haughty Cloe, to sustain
 The honour of my mystic reign,

Shall all his gifts and vows disdain, 55
 And laugh at your old bully's pain.

Dear couz, said Hermes, in a fright,
For heaven's sake keep your darts : good night. 58

DEMOCRITUS AND HERACLITUS.

DEMOCRITUS, dear droll, revisit earth,
And with our follies glut thy heighten'd mirth :
Sad Heraclitus, serious wretch, return,
In louder grief our greater crimes to mourn,
Between you both I unconcern'd stand by ;
Hurt can I laugh ? and honest need I cry ? 6

MERRY ANDREW.

SLY Merry Andrew, the last Southwark fair ;
(At Barthol'mew he did not much appear,
So peevish was the edict of the May'r)
At Southwark, therefore, as his tricks he show'd,
To please our masters, and his friends the crowd, 5
A huge neat's tongue he in his right hand held,
His left was with a good black pudding fill'd.
With a grave look, in this odd equipage,
The clownish mimic traverses the stage :
Why, how now, Andrew ! cries his brother droll, 10
To-day's conceit methinks is something dull.
Come on Sir, to our worthy friends explain
What does your emblematic Worship mean ?
Quoth Andrew, honest English let us speak ;
Your emble—(what d'ye call it ?) is Heathen Greek.
To tongue or pudding thou hast no pretence ; 16
Learning thy talent is, but mine is sense.
That busy fool I was which thou art now,
Desirous to correct, not knowing how,
With very good design, but little wit, 20
Blaming or praising things as I thought fit :
I for this conduct had what I deserv'd,
And dealing honestly was almost starv'd.
But thanks to my indulgent stars, I eat,
Since I have found the secret to be great. 25

O dearest Andrew, says the humble droll,
 Henceforth may I obey and thou control;
 Provided thou impart thy useful skill—
 Bow then, says Andrew, and for once I will.—
 Be of your patron's mind, whate'er he says; 30
 Sleep very much; think little, and talk less:
 Mind neither good nor bad, nor right nor wrong,
 But eat your pudding, slave, and hold your tongue.
 A rev'rend prelate stopp'd his coach-and-six
 To laugh a little at our Andrew's tricks: 35
 But when he heard him give this golden rule,
 Drive on (he cry'd) this fellow is no fool. 37

GAULTERUS DANISTONUS

AD AMICOS.

DUM studeo fungi fallentis munere vitæ,
 Adfectoque viam sedibus Elysiis,
 Arctoa florens Sophiâ, Samiisque superbus
 Discipulis, animas morte carere cano.
 Has ego corporibus profugas ad sidera mitto; 5
 Sideraque ingressis otia blanda dico;
 Qualia conveniunt divis, queis fata volebant
 Vitæ faciles mollitèr ire vias:
 Vinaque coelicolis media inter gaudia libo;
 Et me quid majus suspicor esse viro, 10
 Sed fuerint nulli forsan, quos spondeo, cœli;
 Nullaque sint Ditis numina, nulla Jovis:
 Fabula sit terris agitur, quæ vita relictis;
 Quique superstes homo; qui nihil, esto Deus.
 Attamen esse hilares, et inanes mittere curas 15
 Proderit, ac vitæ commoditate frui,
 Et festos agitasse dies, ævique fugacis
 Tempora perpetuis detinuisse jocis.
 His me parentem præceptis occupet orcus,
 Et mors; seu divum, seu nihil esse velit; 20
 Nam sophia ars illa est, quæ fallere suavitèr horas
 Admonet, atque orci non timuisse minas. 22

IMITATED.

STUDIOUS the busy moments to deceive,
 That fleet between the cradle and the grave,
 I credit what the Grecian dictates say,
 And Samian sounds o'er Scotia's hills convey.
 When mortal man resigns his transient breath 5
 The body only I give o'er to death;
 The parts dissolv'd and broken frame I mourn:
 What came from earth I see to earth return.
 The immaterial part, th' ethereal soul,
 Nor can change vanquish, nor can death control. 10
 Glad I release it from its partner's cares,
 And bid good angels waft it to the stars:
 Then in the flowing bowl I drown those sighs,
 Which, spite of wisdom, from our weakness rise.
 The draught to the dead's mem'ry I commend, 15
 And offer to thee now, immortal friend:
 But if oppos'd to what my thoughts approve,
 Nor Pluto's rage there be, nor pow'r of Jove,
 On its dark side if thou the prospect take,
 Grant all forgot beyond black Lethe's lake; 20
 In total death suppose the mortal lie,
 No new hereafter, nor a future sky;
 Yet bear thy lot content, yet cease to grieve;
 Why ere death comes dost thou forbear to live?
 The little time thou hast 'twixt instant now 25
 And Fate's approach is all the god's allow;
 And of this little hast thou ought to spare
 To sad reflection and corroding care?
 The moments past, if thou art wise, retrieve
 With pleasant mem'ry of the bliss they gave. 30
 The present hours in present mirth employ,
 And bribe the future with the hopes of joy;
 The future (few or more, howe'er they be)
 Where destin'd erst, nor can by Fate's decree
 Be now cut off betwixt the grave and thee. 35

CHANSON.

QUE fais tu bergere dans ce beau verger
 Tu ne songe guères à me soulager ?
 Tu connois ma flamme, tu vois ma langueur.
 Prens belle inhumaine pitié de mon cœur.

4

II.

Dequoy te plains tu malheureux berger ?
 Que n'ay je point fait pour te soulager !
 J'ay quitté la plaine, mon troupeau mon chien,
 Prend on tant de peine quand on n'aime rein.

8

IMITATED.

WHY thus from the plain does my shepherdess rove,
 Forsaking her swain and neglecting his love ?
 You have heard all my grief, you see how I die,
 Oh ! give some relief to the swain whom you fly.

4

II.

How can you complain, or what am I to say,
 Since my dog lies unfed, and my sheep run astray ?
 Need I tell what I mean that I languish alone !
 When I leave all the plain you may guess 'tis for one.

8

THE LADY'S LOOKING-GLASS.

CELIA and I the other day
 Walk'd o'er the sandhills to the sea ;
 The setting sun adorn'd the coast,
 His beams entire, his fierceness lost ;
 And, on the surface of the deep
 The winds lay, only not asleep :
 The nymph did, like the scene, appear
 Serenely pleasant, calmly fair ;
 Soft fell her words as flew the air.
 With secret joy I heard her say,
 That she would never miss one day
 A walk so fine, a sight so gay.

5

10

But, oh the change! the winds grow high;
 Impending tempests charge the sky;
 The lightning flies, the thunder roars, 15
 And big waves lash the frighten'd shores.
 Struck with the horror of the sight,
 She turns her head, and wings her flight,
 And, trembling, vows she'll ne'er again
 Approach the shore or view the main. 20

Once more, at least, look back, said I,
 Thyself in that large glass descry;
 When thou art in good humour drest,
 When gentle reason rules thy breast,
 The sun, upon the calmest sea, 25
 Appears not half so bright as thee:
 'Tis then that with delight I rove
 Upon the boundless depth of love;
 I bless my chain, I hand my oar,
 Nor think on all I left on shore. 30

But when vain doubt and groundless fear
 Do that dear foolish bosom tear,
 When the big lip and wat'ry eye
 Tell me the rising storm is nigh,
 'Tis then thou art yon' angry main, 35
 Deform'd by winds and dash'd by rain,
 And the poor sailor, that must try
 Its fury, labours less than I.

Shipwreck'd, in vain to land I make,
 While Love and Fate still drive me back: 40
 Forc'd to dote on thee thy own way,
 I chide thee first, and then obey.
 Wretched when from thee, vex'd when nigh,
 I with thee or without thee die. 44

THE LADY

WHO OFFERS HER LOOKING-GLASS TO VENUS.

VENUS, take my votive glass,
 Since I am not what I was;
 What from this day I shall be,
 Venus, let me never see.

THE CHAMELEON.

AS the Chameleon, who is known
To have no colours of his own,
But borrows from his neighbours' hue
His white or black, his green or blue,
And struts as much in ready light,
Which credit gives him upon sight,
As if the rainbow were in tail
Settled on him and his heirs-male;
So the young 'squire, when first he comes
From country school to Will's or Tom's,
And equally in truth is fit
To be a statesman or a wit,
Without one notion of his own,
He saunters wildly up and down,
Till some acquaintance, good or bad,
Takes notice of a staring lad,
Admits him in among the gang;
They jest, reply, dispute, harangue;
He acts and talks as they befriend him,
Smear'd with the colours which they lend him. 10

Thus merely as his fortune chances
His merit or his vice advances.

If haply he the sect pursues
That read and comment upon news,
He takes up their mysterious face;
He drinks his coffee without lace: 25
This week his mimic tongue runs o'er
What they have said the week before;
His wisdom sets all Europe right,
And teaches Marlbrôugh when to fight. 30

Or if it be his fate to meet
With folks who have more wealth than wit,
He loves cheap Port and double bub,
And settles in the Humdrum club:
He learns how stocks will fall or rise;
Holds poverty the greatest vice; 35

Thinks wit the bane of conversation,
And says that learning spoils a nation.

But if at first he minds his hits,
And drinks Champaine among the wits, 40
Five deep he toasts the tow'ring lasses,
Repeats you verses wrote on glasses:
Is in the chair, prescribes the law,
And lies with those he never saw. 44

THE FLIES.

SAY, fire of insects, mighty Sol,
(A fly upon the chariot-pole
Cries out) What blue-bottle alive
Did ever with such fury drive?
Tell Belzebub, great Father, tell, 5
(Says th' other, perch'd upon the wheel)
Did ever any mortal fly
Raise such a cloud of dust as I?
My judgment turn'd the whole debate;
My valour sav'd the sinking state. 10
So talk two idle buzzing things,
Toss up their heads, and stretch their wings.
But let the truth to light be brought,
This neither spoke nor th' other fought;
No merit in their own behav'our;
Both rais'd but by their party's favour. 16

THE FEMALE PHAETON.

THUS Kitty, beautiful and young,
And wild as colt untam'd,
Bespoke the fair from whence she sprung,
With little rage inflam'd. 4

II.

Inflam'd with rage at sad restraint
Which wise mamma ordain'd,
And sorely vex'd to play the faint
Whilst wit and beauty reign'd. 8

III.

Shall I thumb holy books, confin'd
 With Abigails, forsaken?
 Kitty's for other things design'd,
 Or I am much mistaken.

12

IV.

Must Lady Jenny frisk about,
 And visit with her cousins?
 At balls must she make all the rout,
 And bring home hearts by dozens?

16

V.

What has she better, pray, than I?
 What hidden charms to boast,
 That all mankind for her should die,
 Whilst I am scarce a toast?

20

VI.

Dearest Mamma, for once let me
 Unchain'd my fortune try:
 I'll have my earl as well as she,
 Or know the reason why.

24

VII.

I'll soon with Jenny's pride quit score,
 Make all her lovers fall:
 They'll grieve I was not loos'd before;
 She I was loos'd at all.

28

VIII.

Fondness prevail'd, mamma gave way:
 Kitty, at heart's desire,
 Obtain'd the chariot for a day,
 And set the world on fire.

32

THE WANDERING PILGRIM.

Humbly addressed to

SIR THOMAS FRANKLAND, BART.

Postmaster, and Paymaster-general to Queen Anne.

WILL Piggot must to Coxwould go,
 To live, alas! in want,
 Unless Sir Thomas say No, no,
 Th' allowance is too scant. 4

II.

The gracious knight full well does weet
 Ten farthings ne'er will do
 To keep a man each day in meat;
 Some bread to meat is due. 8

III.

A Rechabite poor Will must live,
 And drink of Adam's ale;
 Pure element no life can give,
 Or mortal soul regale. 12

IV.

Spare diet and spring-water clear
 Physicians hold are good:
 Who diets thus need never fear
 A fever in the blood. 16

V.

Gra'mercy, Sirs, ye're in the right;
 Prescriptions all can sell,
 But he that does not eat can't sh * * *
 Or piss if good drink fail. 20

VI.

But pass——The Æsculapian crew,
 Who eat and quaff the best,
 They seldom miss to bake and brew,
 Or lin to break their fast.

VII.

Could Yorkshire tyke but do the same,
 Then he like them might thrive;

But Fortune, Fortune, cruel Dame,
To starve thou dost him drive.

28

VIII.

In Will's old master's plenteous days
His mem'ry e'er be blest,
What need of speaking in his praise?
His goodness stands confest.

32

IX.

At his fam'd gate stood Charity
In lovely sweet array;
Ceres and Hospitality
Dwelt there both night and day.

36

X.

But to conclude, and be concise,
Truth must Will's voucher be;
Truth never yet went in disguise,
For naked still is she.

40

XI.

There is but one, but one alone,
Can set the pilgrim free,
And make him cease to pine and moan;
O Frankland, it is thee.

44

XII.

Oh! save him from a dreary way;
To Coxwould he must hie,
Bereft of thee he wends astray,
At Coxwould he must die.

48

XIII.

Oh! let him in thy hall but stand,
And wear a porter's gown,
Duteous to what thou may'st command,
Thus William's wishes crown.

52

NONPAREIL.

LET others from the Town retire,
And in the fields seek new delight;
My Phillis does such joys inspire,
No other objects please my sight.

4

II.

In her alone I find whate'er
 Beauties a country landscape grace;
 No shade so lovely as her hair,
 Nor plain so sweet as is her face. 8

III.

Lilies and roses there combine,
 More beauteous than in flow'ry field;
 Transparent is her skin so fine,
 To this each crystal stream must yield. 12

IV.

Her voice more sweet than warbling sound,
 Tho' sung by nightingale or lark;
 Her eyes such lustre dart around,
 Compar'd to them the sun is dark. 16

V.

Both light and vital heat they give,
 Cherish'd by them my love takes root;
 From her kind looks does life receive,
 Grows a fair plant, bears flow'rs and fruit. 20

VI.

Such fruit I ween did once deceive
 The common parent of mankind,
 And made transgress our mother Eve,
 Poison its core, tho' fair its rind. 24

VII.

Yet so delicious is its taste,
 I cannot from the bait abstain,
 But to th' enchanting pleasure haste,
 Tho' I were sure 'twould end in pain. 28

THE DESPAIRING SHEPHERD.

ALEXIS shunn'd his fellow-swains,
 Their rural sports and jocund strains;
 (Heav'n guard us all from Cupid's bow!)
 He lost his crook, he left his flocks,
 And, wand'ring thro' the lonely rocks,
 He nourish'd endless woe. 5

The nymphs and shepherds round him came ;
 His grief some pity, others blame ;
 The fatal cause all kindly seek :
 He mingled his concern with theirs ;
 He gave 'em back their friendly tears ;
 He sigh'd, but would not speak.
 Clorinda came among the rest,
 And she, too, kind concern exprest,
 And ask'd the reason of his woe :
 She ask'd, but with an air and mien
 That made it easily foreseen
 She fear'd too much to know.
 The shepherd rais'd his mournful head ;
 And will you pardon me, he said,
 While I the cruel truth reveal,
 Which nothing from my breast should tear,
 Which never should offend your ear,
 But that you bid me tell ?
 'Tis thus I rove, 'tis thus complain,
 Since you appear'd upon the plain ;
 You are the cause of all my care :
 Your eyes ten thousand dangers dart,
 Ten thousand torments vex my heart ;
 I love and I despair.
 Too much Alexis I have heard :
 'Tis what I thought, 'tis what I fear'd ;
 And yet I pardon you, she cry'd :
 But you shall promise ne'er again
 To breathe your vows or speak your pain.
 He bow'd, obey'd, and dy'd.

THE OLD GENTRY.

THAT all from Adam first began,
 None but ungodly Whiston doubts,
 And that his son and his son's son
 Were all but ploughmen, clowns, and louts.
 II.
 Each when his rustic pains began
 To merit pleaded equal right ;

'Twas only who left off at noon,
Or who went on to work till night.

8

III.

But coronets we owe to crowns,
And favour to a court's affection;
By nature we are Adam's sons,
And sons of Anstis by election.

12

IV.

Kingfale! eight hundred years have roll'd
Since thy forefathers held the plough;
When this in story shall be told,
Add, that my kindred do so now.

16

V.

The man who by his labour gets
His bread in independent state,
Who never begs, and seldom eats,
Himself can fix or change his fate.

20

THE PEDANT.

LYSANDER talks extremely well;
On any subject let him dwell,
His tropes and figures will content ye
He should possess to all degrees
The art of talk; he practises
Full fourteen hours in four-and-twenty.

6

THE REMEDY

WORSE THAN THE DISEASE.

I SENT for Ratcliffe, was so ill,
That other doctors gave me over,
He felt my pulse, prescrib'd his pill,
And I was likely to recover.

4

II.

But when the wit began to wheeze,
And wine had warm'd the politician,
Cur'd yesterday of my disease,
I dy'd last night of my physician.

8

THE SECRETARY.

WRITTEN AT THE HAGUE, 1696.

WHILE with labour assiduous due pleasure I mix,
 And in one day atone for the bus'ness of six,
 In a little Dutch chaise, on a Saturday night,
 On my left hand my Horace, a W*** on my right :
 No memoirs to compose, and no postboy to move, 5
 That on Sunday may hinder the softness of love ;
 For her, neither visits, nor parties at tea,
 Nor the long-winded cant of a dull refugee :
 This night and the next shall be her's, shall be mine,
 To good or ill fortune the third we resign : 10
 Thus scorning the world, and superior to fate,
 I drive on my car in processional state ;
 So with Phia thro' Athens Pisistratus rode,
 Men thought her Minerva, and him a new god.
 But why should I stories of Athens rehearse, 15
 Where people knew love, and were partial to verse ;
 Since none can with justice my pleasure oppose,
 In Holland half drown'd in int'rest and prose ?
 By Greece and past ages what need I be try'd, 19
 When the Hague and the present are both on my side ?
 And is it enough for the joys of the day
 To think what Anacreon or Sappho would say ?
 When good Vendergoes and his provident Vrow,
 As they gaze on my triumph, do freely allow
 That search all the province, you'll find no man dar is
 So blest as the *Englischen heer Secretar'* is. 26

CONSIDERATIONS

ON PART OF THE LXXXVIIIth PSALM.

[A college exercise, 1690.]

HEAVY, O Lord, on me thy judgments lie ;
 Accurst I am while God rejects my cry.
 O'erwhelm'd in darkness and despair I groan,
 And ev'ry place is hell, for God is gone.

O Lord arise, and let thy beams control
 Those horrid clouds that press my frightened soul:
 Save the poor wand'rer from eternal night,
 Thou that art the God of light.

8

II.

Downward I hasten to my destin'd place;
 There none obtain thy aid, or sing thy praise.
 Soon shall I lie in death's deep ocean drown'd:
 Is mercy there, or sweet forgiveness found?
 O save me yet whilst on the brink I stand;
 Rebuke the storm, and waft my soul to land,
 O let her rest beneath thy wing secure,
 Thou that art the God of pow'r.

16

III.

Behold the prodigal! to thee I come.
 To hail my father, and to seek my home.
 Nor refuge could I find, nor friend abroad,
 Straying in vice, and destitute of God.
 O let thy terrors and my anguish end!
 Be thou my refuge, and be thou my friend:
 Receive the son thou didst so long reprove,
 Thou that art the God of love.

24

TWO RIDDLES, 1710.

SPHINX was a monster that would eat
 Whatever stranger she could get,
 Unless his ready wit disclos'd
 The subtle riddle she propos'd.

Oedipus was resolv'd to go
 And try what strength of parts would do;
 Says Sphinx, on this depends your fate;
 Tell me what animal is that
 Which has four feet at morning bright,
 Has two at noon, and three at night?
 'Tis Man, said he, who, weak by nature,
 At first creeps, like his fellow-creature,
 Upon all four; as years accrue,
 With sturdy steps he walks on two;

10

In age at length grows weak and sick,
For his third leg adopts the stick. 15

Now, in your turn, 'tis just, methinks,
You should resolve me, Madam Sphinx,
What greater stranger yet is he
Who has four legs, then two, then three;
Then loses one, then gets two more,
And runs away at last on four? 22

ON BEAUTY. A RIDDLE.

RESOLVE me, Cloe, what is this,
Or forfeit me one precious kiss.
'Tis the first offspring of the Graces
Bears diff'rent forms in diff'rent places;
Acknowledg'd fine where'er beheld, 5
Yet fancy'd finer when conceal'd.
'Twas Flora's wealth, and Circe's charm,
Pandora's box of good and harm;
'Twas Mars' wish, Endymion's dream,
Apelles' draught, and Ovid's theme : 10
This guided Theseus thro' the maze,
And sent him home with life and praise;
But this undid the Phrygian boy,
And blew the flames that ruin'd Troy :
This shew'd great kindness to old Greece, 15
And help'd rich Jason to the fleece :
This thro' the East just vengeance hurl'd,
And lost poor Anthony the world :
Injur'd, tho' Lucrece found her doom;
This banish'd tyranny from Rome : 20
Appeas'd, tho' Lais gain'd her hire;
This set Persepolis on fire;
For this Alcides learn'd to spin,
His club laid down, and lion's skin:
For this Apollo deign'd to keep 25
With servile care a mortal's sheep :
For this the father of the gods,
Content to leave his high abodes,

In borrow'd figures loofely ran,
 Europa's bull, and Leda's swan: 30
 For this he reafsumes the nod,
 (While Semele commands the god)
 Launches the boat, and shakes the poles,
 Tho' Momus laughs, and Juno scolds.

Here lift'ning Cloe fmil'd, and said, 35
 Your riddle is not hard to read:
 I guefs it——Fair one, if you do,
 Need I, alas! the theme purfue?
 For this thou fee'ft, for this I leave
 Whate'er the world thinks wife or grave. 40
 Ambition, bus'nefs, friendship, news,
 My useful books and ferious Mufe:
 For this I willingly decline
 The mirth of feafts and joys of wine,
 And chufe to fit and talk with thee 45
 (As thy great orders may decree)
 Of cocks and bulls, of flutes and fiddles,
 Of idle tales, and foolifh riddles. 48

AN EXTEMPORE INVITATION

TO THE EARL OF OXFORD,

Lord High Treasurer, 1712.

MY LORD,

OUR weekly friends to-morrow meet
 At Matthew's palace in Duke-ftreet,
 To try for once if they can dine
 On bacon-ham and mutton-chine.
 If, weary'd with the great affairs 5
 Which Britain trusts to Harley's cares,
 Thou, humble Statesman, may'ft defcend
 Thy mind one moment to unbend,
 To fee thy fervant from his foul
 Crown with thy health the fprightly bowl, 10
 Among the guefts, which e'er my houfe
 Receiv'd it never can produce

Of honour a more glorious proof—
Tho' Dorset us'd to bless the roof. 14

WRITTEN AT PARIS, 1700,

IN THE BEGINNING OF ROBE'S GEOGRAPHY.

OF all that William rules, or Robe
Describes, great Rhea, of thy globe,
When or on posthorse or in chaise,
With much expence and little ease,
My destin'd miles I shall have gone,
By Thames, or Maese, by Po, or Rhone,
And found no foot of earth my own;
Great Mother, let me once be able
To have a garden, house, and stable,
That I may read, and ride, and plant,
Superior to desire or want;
And as health fails, and years increase,
Sit down and think, and die in peace.
Oblige thy fav'rite undertakers
To throw me in but twenty acres;
This number sure they may allow,
For pasture ten, and ten for plough;
'Tis all that I would wish or hope,
For me, and John, and Nell, and Crop. 15

Then as thou wilt dispose the rest
(And let not Fortune spoil the jest)
To those who at the market-rate
Can barter honour for estate. 20

Now if thou grant'st me my request,
To make thy vot'ry truly blest,
Let curst Revenge and saucy Pride
To some bleak rock far off be ty'd,
Nor e'er approach my rural seat,
To tempt me to be base and great. 25

And, Goddess, this kind office done,
Charge Venus to command her son
(Wherever else she lets him rove)
To shun my house, and field, and grove:
Peace cannot dwell with Hate or Love. 30

44 PRIOR'S POEMS.
Hear, gracious Rhea, what I say,
And thy petitioner shall pray.

36

WRITTEN IN
MONTAIGNE'S ESSAYS.

Given to the
DUKE OF SHREWSBURY IN FRANCE,
After the Peace, 1713.

DICTATE, O mighty Judge, what thou hast seen
Of cities and of courts, of books and men,
And deign to let thy servant hold the pen.

Thro' ages, thus, I may presume to live,
And from the transcript of thy prose receive
What my own short-liv'd verse can never give. 6

Thus shall fair Britain, with a gracious smile,
Accept the work, and the instructed isle
For more than treaties made shall bless my toil.

Nor longer hence the Gallic style preferr'd,
Wisdom in English idiom shall be heard, II
While Talbot tells the world where Montaigne err'd.

WRITTEN IN THE BEGINNING OF
MEZERAY'S HISTORY OF FRANCE.

WHATE'ER thy countrymen have done
By law and wit, by sword and gun,
In thee is faithfully recited,
And all the living world that view
Thy work, give thee the praises due
At once instructed and delighted. 6

II.

Yet for the fame of all these deeds
What beggar in the invalids,

With lameness broke, with blindness smitten,
 Wish'd ever decently to die,
 To have been either Mezeray,
 Or any Monarch he has written?

12

III.

It's strange, dear Author, yet it true is,
 That down from Pharamond to Louis
 All covet life, yet call it pain,
 And feel the ill, yet shun the cure:
 Can sense this paradox endure?
 Resolve me, Cambray, or Fontaine.

18

IV.

The man in graver tragic known
 (Tho' his best part long since was done)
 Still on the Stage desires to tarry,
 And he who play'd the Harlequin,
 After the jest still loads the scene,
 Unwilling to retire tho' weary.

24

Written in the

NOUVEAUX INTERESTS

DES PRINCES DE L'EUROPE.

BLEST be the princes who have fought
 For pompous names or wide dominion,
 Since by their error we are taught
 That happiness is but opinion.

4

WRITTEN IN AN OVID.

OVID is the surest guide
 You can name to show the way
 To any woman, maid, or bride,
 Who resolves to go astray.

4

VERSES

Spoken to

LADY HENRIETTA CAVENDISH HOLLES HARLEY,

Countess of Oxford.

In the Library of St. John's College, Cambridge, Nov. 9, 1719.

MADAM,

SINCE Anna visited the Muse's seat,
 (Around her tomb let weeping angels wait)
 Hail, thou, the brightest of thy sex, and best,
 Most gracious neighbour and most welcome guest :
 Not Harley's self, to Cam and Isis dear, 5
 In virtues and in arts great Oxford's heir,
 Not he such present honour shall receive
 As to his consort we aspire to give.

Writings of men our thoughts to day neglects,
 To pay due homage to the softer sex : 10
 Plato and Tully we forbear to read,
 And their great foll'wers whom this House has bred,
 To study lessons from thy morals giv'n,
 And shining characters impress'd by Heav'n.
 Science in books no longer we pursue, 15
 Minerva's self in Harriet's face we view ;
 For when with Beauty we can Virtue join,
 We paint the semblance of a form divine,

Their pious incense let our neighbours bring
 To the kind mem'ry of some bounteous king : 20
 With grateful hand due altars let them raise
 To some good knight's or holy prelate's praise ;
 We tune our voices to a nobler theme,
 Your eyes we bless, your praises we proclaim ;
 Saint John's was founded in a woman's name. 25
 Enjoin'd by Statute, to the Fair we bow ;
 In spite of time we keep our ancient vow ; 27
 What Marg'ret Tudor was, is Harriet Harley now.

ON BISHOP ATTERBURY'S

Burying the Duke of Buckingham, 1721,

I HAVE no hopes, the Duke he says, and dies.
 In sure and certain hopes—the prelate cries :
 Of these two learned peers, I pr'ythee say, man,
 Who is the lying knave, the priest or layman ?
 The Duke he stands an infidel confest : 5
 He's our dear brother, quoth the lordly Priest.
 The Duke, tho' knave, still brother dear he cries,
 And who can say the rev'rend Prelate lies ? 8

ON A PICTURE OF SENECA

DYING IN A BATH,

BY JORDAIN.

At the Right Honourable

THE EARL OF EXETER'S, AT BURLEIGH HOUSE.

WHILE cruel Nero only drains
 The moral Spaniard's ebbing veins,
 By study worn, and slack with age,
 How dull, how thoughtless is his rage ?
 Heighten'd revenge he should have took ; 5
 He should have burnt his tutor's book.
 And long have reign'd supreme in vice ;
 One nobler wretch can only rise ;
 'Tis he whose fury shall deface
 The Stoic's image in this piece ; 10
 For while unhurt, divine Jordain,
 Thy work and Seneca's remain,
 He still has body, still has soul,
 And lives and speaks, restor'd and whole. 14

SEEING THE
DUKE OF ORMOND'S PICTURE

At Sir Godfrey Kneller's.

OUT from the injur'd canvas, Kneller, strike
 These lines, too faint ; the picture is not like.
 Exalt thy thought, and try thy toil again :
 Dreadful in arms, on Landen's glorious plain
 Place Ormond's Duke : impendent in the air
 Let his keen sabre ; comet-like, appear,
 Where'er it points denouncing death : below
 Draw routed squadrons, and the num'rous foe
 Falling beneath, or flying from his blow ;
 Till weak with wounds, and cover'd o'er with blood, 10
 Which from the patriot's breast in torrents flow'd,
 He faints : his steed no longer hears the rein,
 But stumbles o'er the heap his hand had slain.
 And now exhausted, bleeding, pale he lies,
 Lovely, sad object ! in his half-clos'd eyes 15
 Stern Vengeance yet and hostile Terror stand :
 His front yet threatens, and his frowns command.
 The Gallic chiefs their troops around him call,
 Fear to approach him, tho' they see him fall.
 O Kneller ! could thy shades and lights express 20
 The perfect hero in that glorious dress,
 Ages to come might Ormond's picture know,
 And palms for thee beneath his laurels grow ;
 In spite of time thy work might ever shine,
 Nor Homer's colours last so long as thine. 25

UPON THIS

PASSAGE IN SCALIGERIANA.

*Les allemans ne ce soucient pas quel vin ils boivent
pouveu que ce soit vin, ni quel Latin ils parlent pou-
veu que ce soit Latin.*

WHEN you with High-Dutch Heeren dine,
Expect false Latin and stum'd wine :
They never taste who always drink ;
They always talk who never think.

4

ON MY BIRTH-DAY,

July 21.

I MY dear, was born to-day,
So all my jolly comrades say ;
They bring me music, wreaths, and mirth,
And ask to celebrate my birth.
Little, alas ! my comrades know
That I was born to pain and woe.
To thy denial, to thy scorn,
Better I had ne'er been born :
I wish to die e'en whilst I say,
I, my dear, was born to-day.

5

10

II.

I, my dear, was born to-day ;
Shall I salute the rising ray ?
Wellspring of all my joy and woe,
Clotilda, thou alone dost know :
Shall the wreath surround my hair ?
Or shall the music please my ear ?
Shall I my comrade's mirth receive,
And bless my birth, and wish to live ?
Then let me see great Venus chase
Imperious anger from thy face ;
Then let me hear thee smiling say,
Thou, my dear, wert born to-day.

15

20

LOVE DISARMED.

BENEATH a myrtle's verdant shade,
 As Cloe half asleep was laid,
 Cupid perch'd lightly on her breast,
 And in that heav'n desir'd to rest ;
 Over her paps his wings he spread,
 Between he found a downy bed,
 And nestled in his little head.

5

Still lay the god : the nymph, surpris'd,
 Yet mistress of herself, devis'd
 How she the vagrant might enthrall,
 And captive him who captives all.

10

Her bodice half way she unlac'd,
 About his arms she flily cast
 The silken bond, and held him fast.

The god awak'd, and thrice in vain
 He strove to break the cruel chain ;
 And thrice in vain he shook his wing,
 Incumber'd in the silken string.

15

Flutt'ring, the god, and weeping, said,
 Pity poor Cupid, gen'rous maid,
 Who happen'd, being blind, to stray,
 And on thy bosom lost his way ;
 Who stray'd, alas ! but knew too well
 He never there must hope to dwell.
 Set an unhappy pris'ner free
 Who ne'er intended harm to thee.

20

25

To me pertains not, she replies,
 To know or care where Cupid flies ;
 What are his haunts, or which his way,
 Where he would dwell, or whither stray ;
 Yet will I never set thee free,
 For harm was meant, and harm to me.

30

Vain fears that vex thy virgin heart !
 I'll give thee up my bow and dart,
 Untangle but this cruel chain,
 And freely let me fly again.

35

PRIOR



Agreed : secure my virgin heart ;
 Instant give up thy bow and dart ;
 The chain I'll in return untie,
 And freely thou again shalt fly.
 Thus she the captive did deliver ;
 The captive thus gave up his quiver.
 The god, disarm'd, e'er since that day
 Passes his life in harmless play ;
 Flies round, or sits upon her breast,
 A little flutt'ring idle guest.

40

45

E'er since that day the beauteous maid
 Governs the world in Cupid's stead,
 Directs his arrows as she wills,
 Gives grief or pleasure, spares or kills.

50

A LOVER'S ANGER.

AS Cloe came into the room the other day,
 I peevish began, Where so long could you stay ?
 In your lifetime you never regarded your hour ;
 You promis'd at two, and (pray look Child) 'tis four.
 A lady's watch needs neither figures nor wheels, 5
 'Tis enough that 'tis loaded with baubles and seals.
 A temper so heedless no mortal can bear—
 Thus far I went on with a resolute air.
 Lord bless me ! said she, let a body but speak ;
 Here's an ugly hard rose-bud fall'n into my neck ; 10
 It has hurt me and vexed me to such a degree—
 See here, for you never believe me ; pray see,
 On the left side my breast, what a mark it has made.
 So saying, her bosom she careless display'd :
 That feat of delight I with wonder survey'd,
 And forgot ev'ry word I design'd to have said. 16

LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP.

A PASTORAL.

BY MRS. ELIZABETH SINGER.

AMARYLLIS.

WHILE from the skies the ruddy sun descends,
 And rising night the ev'ning shade extends;
 While pearly dew's o'erspread the fruitful field,
 And closing flow'rs reviving odours yield,
 Let us, beneath these spreading trees, recite
 What from our hearts our Muses may indite:
 Nor need we in th's close retirement fear
 Lest any swain our am'rous secrets hear.

SYLV. To ev'ry shepherd I would mine proclaim,
 Since fair Aminta is my softest theme: 5 10

A stranger to the loose delights of love,
 My thoughts the nobler warmth of friendship prove,
 And, while its pure and sacred fire I sing,
 Chaste goddess of the Groves, thy succour bring.

AMAR. Propitious god of Love, my breast inspire 15
 With all thy charms, with all thy pleasing fire;
 Propitious god of Love, thy succour bring,
 Whilst I thy darling, thy Alexis sing;
 Alexis, as the op'ning blossoms fair,
 Lovely as light, and soft as yielding air: 20
 For him each virgin sighs, and on the plains
 The happy youth above each rival reigns;
 Nor to the echoing groves and whisp'ring spring
 In sweeter strains does artful Canon sing,
 When loud applauses fill the crowded groves, 25
 And Phoebus the superior song approves.

SYLV. Beauteous Aminta is as early light
 Breaking the melancholy shades of night.
 When she is near all anxious trouble flies,
 And our reviving hearts confess her eyes. 30
 Young Love, and blooming Joy, and gay Desires,
 In ev'ry breast the beauteous nymph inspires;

And on the plain when she no more appears,
 The plain a dark and gloomy prospect wears.
 In vain the streams roll on; the eastern breeze
 Dances in vain among the trembling trees:
 In vain the birds begin their ev'ning song,
 And to the silent night their notes prolong;
 Nor groves, nor crystal streams, nor verdant field,
 Does wonted pleasure in her absence yield. 35 40

AMAR. And in his absence all the pensive day
 In some obscure retreat I lonely stray;
 All day, to the repeating caves, complain
 In mournful accents and a dying strain:
 Dear lovely youth I cry to all around;
 Dear lovely youth the flatt'ring vales resound. 45

SYLV. On flow'ry banks, by ev'ry murm'ring stream,
 Aminta is my Muse's softest theme;
 'Tis she that does my artful notes refine;
 With fair Aminta's name my noblest verse shall shine. 49

AMAR. I'll twine fresh garlands for Alexis' brows,
 And consecrate to him eternal vows;
 The charming youth shall my Apollo prove;
 He shall adorn my songs, and tune my voice to love.

TO THE AUTHOR

OF THE FOREGOING PASTORAL.

BY Sylvia if thy charming self be meant;
 If friendship be thy virgin vows' extent,
 O! let me in Aminta's praises join,
 Her's my esteem shall be, my passion thine.
 When for thy head the garland I prepare,
 A second wreath shall bind Aminta's hair;
 And when my choicest songs thy worth proclaim,
 Alternate verse shall bless Aminta's name;
 My heart shall own the justice of her cause,
 And Love himself submit to Friendship's laws. 5 10

But if beneath thy numbers' soft disguise
 Some favour'd swain, some true Alexis, lies;
 If Amaryllis breathes thy secret pains,
 And thy fond heart beats measure to thy strains

May'st thou, howe'er I grieve, for ever find 15
The flame propitious and the lover kind;
May Venus long exert her happy pow'r,
And make thy beauty like thy verse endure;
May ev'ry god his friendly aid afford,
Pan guard thy flock, and Ceres bless thy board. 20

But if, by chance, the series of thy joys
Permit one thought less cheerful to arise,
Piteous transfer it to the mournful swain,
Who loving much, who not belov'd again,
Feels an ill-fated passion's last excess,
And dies in woe that thou may'st live in peace. 26

CHARITY:

A PARAPHRASE ON I COR. CHAP. XIII.

DID sweeter sounds adorn my flowing tongue
Than ever man pronounc'd or angel sung;
Had I all knowledge, human and divine,
That thought can reach or science can define;
And had I pow'r to give that knowledge birth 5
In all the speeches of the babbling earth;
Did Shadrach's zeal my glowing breast inspire,
To weary tortures and rejoice in fire;
Or had I faith like that which Israel saw
When Moses gave them miracles and law; 10
Yet gracious Charity, indulgent guest,
Were not thy pow'r exerted in my breast,
Those speeches would send up unheeded pray'r,
That scorn of life would be but wild despair;
A cymbal's sound were better than my voice; 15
My faith were form, my eloquence were noise.
Charity! decent, modest, easy, kind,
Softens the high, and rears the abject mind;
Knows with just reins, and gentle hand, to guide
Betwixt vile shame and arbitrary pride. 20
Not soon provok'd, she easily forgives,
And much she suffers, as she much believes.
Soft peace she brings wherever she arrives;
She builds our quiet as she forms our lives;

Lays the rough paths of peevish Nature ev'n,
And opens in each heart a little heav'n.

25

Each other gift which God on man bestows
Its proper bounds and due reflection knows,
To one fixt purpose dedicates its pow'r,
And finishing its act, exists no more.

30

Thus, in obedience to what heav'n decrees,
Knowledge shall fail, and prophecy shall cease ;
But lasting Charity's more ample sway,
Nor bound by time, nor subject to decay,
In happy triumph shall for ever live,
And endless good diffuse, and endless praise receive.

35

As thro' the artist's intervening glass
Our eye observes the distant planets pass,
A little we discover, but allow

That more remains unseen than art can show ;
So whilst cur mind its knowledge would improve,
(Its feeble eye intent on things above)

40

High as we may we lift our reason up,
By faith directed, and confirm'd by hope ;
Yet are we able only to survey

45

Dawnings of beams, and promises of day,
Heav'n's fuller effluence mocks our dazzled sight,
Too great is swiftnefs, and too strong is light.
But soon the mediate clouds shall be dispell'd,
The sun shall soon be face to face beheld,
In all his robes, with all his glory on,
Seated sublime on his meridian throne.

50

Then constant Faith and holy Hope shall die,
One lost in certainty and one in joy ;

Whilst thou, more happy pow'r, fair Charity,
Triumphant sister, greatest of the three,
Thy office and thy nature still the same,
Lasting thy lamp, and unconsum'd thy flame,
Shalt still survive—

55

Shalt stand before the host of heav'n confest,
For ever blessing, and for ever blest.

61

UPON HONOUR. A FRAGMENT.

HONOUR, I say, or honest fame,
 I mean the substance, not the name,
 (Not that light heap of tawdry wares
 Of ermine, coronets, and stars,
 Which often is by merit fought, 5
 By gold and flatt'ry oft'ner bought ;
 The shade for which ambition looks
 In Selden's or in Ashmole's books)
 But the true glory which proceeds,
 Reflected bright, from honest deeds, 10
 Which we in our own breast perceive,
 And kings can neither take nor give. 12

ADRIANI MORIENTIS

AD ANIMAM SUAM.

ANIMULA, vagulo, blandula,
 Hospes, comesque corporis,
 Quæ nunc abibis in loca,
 Pallidula, rigida, nudula ?
 Nec, ut soles, dabis joca. 5

BY MONS. FONTENELLE.

MA petite ame, ma mignonne, [tu vas :
 Tu t'en vas donc, má fille, et Dieu scache où
 Tu pars feulette, nuë, et tremblotante, hélas !
 Que deviendra ton humeur folichonne ?
 Que deviendront tant de jolis ébats ? 5

IMITATED.

POOOR, little, pretty, flatt'ring thing,
 Must we no longer live together ?
 And dost thou prune thy trembling wing,
 To take thy flight thou know'st not whither ?

Thy hum'rous vine, thy pleasing folly,
 Lies all neglected, all forgot,
 And pensive, wav'ring melancholy,
 Thou dread'st, and hop'st, thou know'st not what. 8

A PASSAGE IN THE
 MORIÆ ENCOMIUM OF ERASMUS
 IMITATED.

IN awful pomp and melancholy state,
 See settled Reason on the judgment-seat ;
 Around her crowd Distrust, and Doubt, and Fear,
 And thoughtful Foresight, and tormenting Care ;
 Far from the throne the trembling Pleasures stand, 5
 Chain'd up or exil'd by her stern command.
 Wretched her subjects, gloomy sits the queen,
 Till happy chance reverts the cruel scene ;
 And apish Folly, with her wild resort
 Of wit and jest, disturbs the solemn court. 10

See the fantastic Minstrelsy advance
 To breathe the song and animate the dance.
 Blest the usurper ! happy the surprise !
 Her mimic postures catch our eager eyes ;
 Her jingling bells affect our captive ear, 15
 And in the sights we see and sounds we hear,
 Against our judgment she our sense employs,
 The laws of troubled reason she destroys,
 And in their place rejoices to indite
 Wild schemes of mirth and plans of loose delight. 20

IN IMITATION OF ANACREON.

LET 'em censure, what care I ?
 The herd of critics I defy :
 Let the wretches know I write
 Regardless of their grace or spite,
 No, no ; the fair, the gay, the young, 5
 Govern the numbers of my song :

All that they approve is sweet,
And all is sense that they repeat.

Bid the warbling Nine retire :
Venus, string thy servant's lyre ; 10
Love, shall be my endless theme ;
Pleasure shall triumph over fame :
And when these maxims I decline,
Apollo, may thy fate be mine ;
May I grasp at empty praise,
And lose the nymph to gain the bays. 16

HORACE, LIB. I. EP. IX. IMITATED.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE MR. HARLEY.

Septimius, Claudi, nimirum intelligit unus,
Quanti me facias, &c.

DEAR Dick*, howe'er it comes into his head,
Believes as firmly as he does his creed,
That you and I Sir are extremely great,
Tho' I plain Matt, you Minister of State.
One word from me, without all doubt, he says, 5
Would fix his fortune in some little place.
Thus better than myself, it seems, he knows
How far my int'rest with my patron goes,
And answering all objections I can make,
Still plunges deeper in his dear mistake. 10

From this wild fancy, Sir, there may proceed
One wilder yet, which I foresee and dread ;
That I in fact a real interest have,
Which to my own advantage I would save,
And, with the usual courtier's trick, intend 15
To serve myself, forgetful of my friend.

To shun this censure I all shame lay by,
And make my reason with his will comply ;
Hoping, for my excuse, 'twill be confest
That of two evils I have chose the least. 20

* Richard Shelton, Esq. whom Mr. Prior, in his will, calls his dear friend and companion.

So, Sir, with this epistolary scroll
 Receive the partner of my inmost soul;
 Him you will find in letters and in laws
 Not unexpert; firm to his country's cause;
 Warm in the glorious interest you pursue,
 And in one word a good man and a true.

26

ENIGMA.

BY birth I'm a slave, yet can give you a crown,
 I dispose of all honours, myself having none;
 I'm oblig'd by just maxims to govern my life,
 Yet I hang my own master and lie with his wife.
 When men are a-gaming I cunningly sneak, 5
 And their cudgels and shovels away from them take.
 Fair maidens and ladies I by the hand get,
 And pick off their diamonds tho' ne'er so well set.
 For when I have comrades we rob in whole bands,
 Then presently take off your lands from your hands;
 But this fury once over, I've such winning arts,
 That you love me much more than you do your own
 hearts. 12

ENIGMA.

FORM'D half beneath and half above the earth,
 We sisters owe to art our second birth;
 The smith's and carpenter's adopted daughters,
 Made on the land, to travel on the waters,
 Swifter they move as they are straiter bound, 5
 Yet neither tread the air, or wave, or ground;
 They serve the poor for use, the rich for whim,
 Sink when it rains, and when it freezes swim.

CANTATA.

SET BY MONS. GALLIARD.

RECIT.

BENEATH a verdant laurel's ample shade
 His lyre to mournful numbers strung,

Horace, immortal bard ! supinely laid,
 To Venus thus address'd the song ;
 Ten thousand little loves around,
 List'ning dwelt on ev'ry sound.

5

ARIET.

Potent Venus, bid thy son
 Sound no more his dire alarms :
 Youth on silent wings is flown ;
 Graver years come rolling on.
 Spare my age unfit for arms :
 Safe and humble let me rest,
 From all am'rous care releas'd.
 Potent Venus, bid thy son
 Sound no more his dire alarms.

10

15

RECIT.

Yet, Venus, why do I each morn prepare
 The fragrant wreath for Cloe's hair ?
 Why, why do I all day lament and sigh,
 Unless the beauteous maid be nigh ?
 And why all night pursue her in my dreams
 Thro' flow'ry meads and crystal streams ?

20

RECIT.

Thus sung the bard, and thus the goddess spoke :
 Submissive bow to Love's imperious yoke ;
 Ev'ry state and ev'ry age
 Shall own my rule and fear my rage :
 Compell'd by me, thy Muse shall prove
 That all the world was born to love.

25

ARIET.

Bid thy destin'd lyre discover
 Soft desire and gentle pain :
 Often praise, and always love her ;
 Thro' her ear her heart obtain.
 Verse shall please and sighs shall move her,
 Cupid does with Phoebus reign.

30

33

AN ENGLISH PADLOCK.

MISS Danae, when fair and young,
 (As Horace has divinely sung)

Could not be kept from Jove's embrace
 By doors of steel and walls of brass:
 The reason of the thing is clear
 Would Jove the naked truth aver;
 Cupid was with him of the party,
 And shew'd himself sincere and hearty;
 For, give that whipster but his errand,
 He takes my Lord Chief Justice' warrant;
 Dauntless as death away he walks,
 Breaks the doors open, snaps the locks,
 Searches the parlour, chamber, study,
 Nor stops till he has culprit's body.

Since this has been authentic truth,
 By age deliver'd down to youth,
 Tell us, mistaken husband, tell us
 Why so mysterious, why so jealous?
 Does the restraint, the bolt, the bar,
 Make us less curious, her less fair?
 The spy which does this treasure keep,
 Does she ne'er say her pray'rs nor sleep?
 Does she to no excess incline?
 Does she fly music, mirth, and wine?
 Or have not gold and flatt'ry pow'r
 To purchase one unguarded hour?

Your care does further yet extend;
 That spy is guarded by your friend—
 But has this friend nor eye nor heart?
 May he not feel the cruel dart
 Which soon or late all mortals feel?
 May he not, with too tender zeal,
 Give the fair pris'ner cause to see
 How much he wishes she were free?
 May he not craftily infer
 The rules of friendship too severe,
 Which chain him to a hated trust,
 Which makes him wretched to be just?
 And may not she, this darling she,
 Youthful and healthy, flesh and blood,
 Easy with him, ill us'd by thee,
 Allow this logic to be good?

Sir, will your questions never end?
 I trust to neither spy nor friend.
 In short, I keep her from the sight 45
 Of ev'ry human face.—She'll write.—
 From pen and paper she's debarr'd.—
 Has she a bodkin and a card?
 She'll prick her mind.—She will, you say;
 But how shall she that mind convey? 50
 I keep her in one room; I lock it;
 The key (look here) is in this pocket.
 The key-hole, is that left? Most certain
 She'll thrust her letter thro'—Sir Martin.

Dear angry friend, what must be done? 55
 Is there no way?—There is but one.
 Send her abroad, and let her see
 That all this mingled mass which she,
 Being forbidden, longs to know,
 Is a dull farce, an empty show, 60
 Powder, and pocket-glass, and beau;
 A staple of romance and lies,
 False tears, and real perjuries;
 Where sighs and looks are bought and sold,
 And love is made but to be told; 65
 Where the fat bawd and lavish heir
 The spoils of ruin'd beauty share;
 And youth, seduc'd from friends and fame,
 Must give up age to want and shame.
 Let her behold the frantic scene, 70
 The women wretched, false the men;
 And when, these certain ills to shun,
 She would to thy embraces run,
 Receive her with extended arms;
 Seem more delighted with her charms; 75
 Wait on her to Park and play;
 Put on good humour, make her gay;
 Be to her virtues very kind;
 Be to her faults a little blind:
 Let all her ways be unconfin'd,
 And clap your Padlock—on her mind. 81

A REASONABLE AFFLICTION.

ON his death bed poor Lubin lies,
 His spouse is in despair :
 With frequent sobs and mutual cries
 They both express their care.
 A diff'rent cause, says Parson Sly,
 The same effect may give ;
 Poor Lubin fears that he shall die,
 His wife that he may live.

8

ANOTHER.

FROM her own native France, as old Alison past,
 She reproach'd English Nell with neglect or with
 malice,
 That the flattern had left in the hurry and haste
 Her lady's complexion and eyebrows at Calais.

4

ANOTHER.

HER eyebrow box one morning lost,
 (The best of folks are oft'nest crost)
 Sad Helen thus to Jenny said,
 Her careless but afflicted maid.
 Put me to bed, then, wretched Jane ;
 Alas ! when shall I rise again ?
 I can behold no mortal now,
 For what's an eye without a brow ?

5

8

ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

IN a dark corner of the house
 Poor Helen sits, and sobs, and cries ;
 She will not see her loving spouse,
 Nor her more dear Piquet allies ;
 Unless she finds her eyebrows,
 She'll e'en weep out her eyes.

6

ON THE SAME.

HELLEN was just slipt into bed,
 Her eyebrows on the toilette lay,
 Away the kitten with them fled,
 As fees belonging to her prey.
 For this misfortune careless Jane,
 Assure yourself, was loudly rated,
 And Madam getting up again,
 With her own hand the mouse-trap baited.
 On little things, as sages write,
 Depends our human joy or sorrow;
 If we don't catch a mouse to-night,
 Alas! no eyebrows for to-morrow.

5

10

12

A TRUE MAID.

NO, no; for my virginity.
 When I lose that, says Rose, I'll die.
 Behind the elms, last night, cry'd Dick,
 Rose, were you not extremely sick?

4

ANOTHER.

TEN months after Florimel happen'd to wed,
 And was brought in a laudable manner to-bed,
 She warbled her groans with so charming a voice
 That one half of the parish was stunn'd with the noise;
 But when Florimel deign'd to lie privately in,
 Ten months before she and her spouse were a-kin,
 She chose with such prudence her pangs to conceal,
 That her nurse, nay her midwife, scarce heard her
 once squeal [lives,
 Learn Husbands from hence, for the peace of your
 That maids make not half such a tumult as wives.

5

10

A DUTCH PROVERB.

FIRE, water, woman, are man's ruin,
 Says wise Professor Vander Brün.

By flames a house I hir'd was lost
 Last year, and I must pay the cost.
 This spring the rains o'erflow'd my ground,
 And my best Flanders mare was drown'd,
 A slave I am to Clara's eyes;
 The gipsy knows her pow'r and flies.
 Fire, water, woman, are my ruin,
 And great thy wisdom Vander Brüin.

5

10

A SIMILE.

DEAR Thomas, didst thou never pop
 Thy head into a tinman's shop?
 There, Thomas, didst thou never see
 ('Tis but by way of Simile)
 A Squirrel spend his little rage
 In jumping round a rolling cage,
 The cage as either side turn'd up,
 Striking a ring of bells a-top?—

5

Mov'd in the orb, pleas'd with the chimes,
 The foolish creature thinks he climbs;
 But here or there, turn wood or wire,
 He never gets two inches higher,

10

So fares it with those merry blades
 That frisk it under Pindus' shades.

In noble songs and lofty odes
 They tread on stars and talk with gods;
 Still dancing in an airy round,
 Still pleas'd with their own verses found;
 Brought back, how fast so'er they go,
 Always aspiring, always low.

15

20

A FLOWER.

PAINTED BY SIMON VARELST.

WHEN fam'd Varelst this little wonder drew,
 Flora vouchsaf'd the growing works to view:
 Finding the painter's science at a stand,
 The goddess snatch'd the pencil from his hand,

And finishing the piece, she smiling said,
Behold one work of mine that ne'er shall fade. 6

A CASE STATED.

NOW how shall I do with my love and my pride,
Dear Dick, give me counsel if friendship has any ;
Pr'ythee purge, or let blood, furly Richard reply'd,
And forget the coquette in the arms of your Nanny. 4

II.

While I pleaded with passion how much I deserv'd
For the pains and the torments for more than a year,
She look'd in an almanack, whence she observ'd
That it wanted a fortnight to Barthol'mew fair. 8

III.

My Cowley and Waller how vainly I quote,
While my negligent judge only hears with her eye ;
In a long flaxen wig and embroider'd new coat,
Her spark saying nothing talks better than I. 12

A FABLE.

*Personam tragiciam forte vulpes viderat,
O quanta species, inquit, cerebrum non habet!*

Phædr.

THE fox an actor's vizard found,
And peer'd, and felt, and turn'd it round,
Then threw it in contempt away,
And thus old Phædrus heard him say,
What noble part canst thou sustain,
Thou specious head without a brain? 6

A CRITICAL MOMENT.

HOW capricious were Nature and Art to poor Nell !
She was painting her cheeks at the time her nose
fell.

FORMA BONUM FRAGILE.

WHAT a frail thing is beauty, says Baron le Crafs,
 Perceiving his mistress had one eye of glass :
 And scarcely had he spoke it,
 When she, more confus'd as more angry she grew,
 By a negligent rage prov'd the maxim too true ;
 She dropp'd the eye and broke it. 6

QUID SIT FUTURUM CRAS FUGE QUÆRERE.

FOR what to-morrow shall disclose
 May spoil what you to-night propose :
 England may change, or Cloe stray ;
 Love and life are for to-day. 4

HER RIGHT NAME.

AS Nancy at her toilette sat,
 Admiring this, and blaming that,
 Tell me, she said, but tell me true,
 The nymph who could your heart subdue,
 What sort of charms does she possess ? 5
 Absolve me, fair one, I'll confess
 With pleasure, I reply'd : Her hair,
 In ringlets rather dark than fair,
 Does down her iv'ry bosom roll,
 And hiding half, adorns the whole. 10
 In her high forehead's fair half round
 Love sits, in open triumph crowned ;
 He, in the dimple of her chin,
 In private state, by friends is seen.
 Her eyes are neither black nor grey, 15
 Nor fierce nor feeble is their ray ;
 Their dubious lustre seems to shew
 Something that speaks nor yes nor no.
 Her lips no living bard, I weet,
 May say how red, how round, how sweet : 20

Old Homer only could indite
 Their vagrant grace and soft delight :
 They stand recorded in his book,
 When Helen smil'd, and Hebe spoke—
 The gypsy, turning to her glafs,
 Too plainly shew'd she knew the face ;
 And which am I most like, she said,
 Your Cloe or your Nut-brown Maid ?

25

28

UPON PLAYING AT OMBRE

WITH TWO LADIES.

I KNOW that Fortune long has wanted fight,
 And therefore pardon'd when she did not right ;
 But yet till then it never did appear
 That, as she wanted eyes, she could not hear.
 I begg'd that she would give me leave to lose,
 A thing she does not commonly refuse.
 Two matadores are out against my game,
 Yet still I play, and still my luck's the same :
 Unconquer'd in three suits it does remain,
 Whereas I only ask in one to gain ;
 Yet she still contradicting gifts imparts,
 And gives success in ev'ry suit—but Hearts.

5

10

11

Engraven on three sides of

AN ANTIQUE LAMP.

GIVEN BY ME TO LORD HARLEY.

MAT. PRIOR.

ANTIQUAM hanc lampadem
 E Museo Colbertino allatam
 Domino Harleo inter *Κεμήγρια* sua
 Reponendam D. D. Matthæus Prior.

4

“ This lamp which Prior to his Harley gave,
 “ Brought from the altar of the Cyprian dame,
 “ Indulgent Time, through future ages save,
 “ Before the Muse to burn with purer flame.”

8

Sperne dilectum Veneris facellum,
 Sanctius, lampas, tibi munus orno :
 I fove casto vigil Harleianas
 Igne cammcenas.

12

Engraven on a Column in

THE CHURCH OF HALSTEAD, IN ESSEX.

*The Spire of which, burnt down by Lightning, was rebuilt at
 the Expence of Mr. S. Fiske, 1717.*

VIEW not this spire by measure given
 To buildings rais'd by common hands :
 That fabric rises high as heaven
 Whose basis on devotion stands.
 While yet we draw this vital breath,
 We can our faith and hope declare ;
 But charity, beyond our death,
 Will ever in our works appear.
 Best be he called among good men,
 Who to his God this column rais'd ;
 Tho' lightning strike the dome again,
 The man who built it shall be prais'd.
 Yet spires and tow'rs in dust shall lie,
 The weak efforts of human pains.
 And Faith and Hope themselves shall die,
 While deathless Charity remains.

5

10

16



FOR THE
PLAN OF A FOUNTAIN,

On which is the
EFFIGIES OF THE QUEEN ON A TRIUMPHAL ARCH,
The figure of the
DUKE OF MARLBOROUGH BENEATH,
And the chief Rivers of the World round the whole Work:

YE active Streams, where'er your waters flow,
Let distant climes and furthest nations know
What ye from Thames and Danube have been taught,
How Anne commanded, and how Marlbrô fought.

“ Quæcunque æterno properatis, flumina, lapsu. 5
“ Divisis late terris, populisque remotis
“ Dicite, nam vobis Tamisis narravit et Ister, 7
“ Anna quid imperiis potuit, quid Marlburus armis.”

AN EPITAPH.

Stet quicunque volet potens
Aulae culmine lubrico, &c.
Seneca.

INTERR'D beneath this marble stone
Lie saunt'ring Jack and idle Joan,
While rolling threescore years and one
Did round this globe their courses run:
If human things went ill or well, 5
If changing empires rose or fell,
The morning past, the evening came,
And found this couple still the same.
They walked and ate, good folks; what then?
Why, then they walk'd and ate again. 10
They soundly slept the night away;
They did just nothing all the day;
And having buried children four,
Would not take pains to try for more.
Nor sister either had, nor brother; 15
They seem'd just tally'd for each other.

Their moral and economy
Most perfectly they made agree ;
Each virtue kept its proper bound,
Nor trespass'd on the other's ground. 20
Nor fame nor censure they regarded ;
They neither punished nor rewarded.
He car'd not what the footman did ;
Her maids she neither prais'd nor chid ;
So ev'ry servant took his course, 25
And, bad at first, they all grew worse,
Slothful disorder filled his stable,
And fluttish plenty deck'd her table.
Their beer was strong ; their wine was Port ;
Their meal was large ; their grace was short. 30
They gave the poor the remnant meat,
Just when it grew not fit to eat.
They paid the church and parish rate,
And took, but read not, the receipt ;
For which they claim'd their Sunday's due, 35
Of slumb'ring in an upper pew,
No man's defects sought they to know,
So never made themselves a foe :
No man's good deeds did they commend,
So never rais'd themselves a friend. 40
Nor cherish'd they relations poor ;
That might decrease their present store :
Nor barn nor house did they repair ;
That might oblige their future heir.
They neither added nor confounded ; 45
They neither wanted nor abounded.
Each Christmas they accounts did clear,
And wound their bottom round the year.
Nor tear nor smile did they employ
At news of public grief or joy. 50
When bells were rung, and bonfires made,
If ask'd, they ne'er deny'd their aid :
Their jug was to the ringers carried.
Whoever either dy'd or married :
Their billet at the fire was found, 55
Whoever was depos'd or crown'd.

Nor good, nor bad, nor fools, nor wise,
 They would not learn, nor could advise:
 Without love, hatred, joy, or fear,
 They led—a kind of—as it were: 60
 Nor wish'd, nor car'd, nor laugh'd, nor cry'd;
 And so they liv'd, and so they dy'd. 62

EPITAPH EXTEMPORE.

NOBLES and Heralds, by your leave,
 Here lies what once was Matthew Prior,
 The son of Adam and of Eve;
 Can Stuart or Nassau claim higher. 4

FOR MY OWN TOMBSTONE.

TO me 'twas giv'n to die; to thee 'tis given
 To live: alas! one moment sets us even.
 Mark! how impartial is the will of Heaven! 3

FOR MY OWN MONUMENT.

AS doctors give phyfic by way of prevention,
 Matt, alive and in health, of his tombstone took
 For delays are unsafe, and his pious intention [care;
 May haply be never fulfill'd by his heir. 4

II.

Then take Matt's word for it, the sculptor is paid;
 That the figure is fine,* pray believe your own eye;
 Yet credit but lightly what more may be said,
 For we flatter ourselves, and teach marble to lie. 8

III.

Yet counting as far as to fifty his years,
 His virtues and vices were as other men's are;
 High hopes he conceiv'd, and he smother'd great fears,
 In a life party-colour'd, half pleasure, half care. 12

IV.

Nor to bus'ness a drudge, nor to faction a slave,
 He strove to make int'rest and freedom agree;

* Alluding to the busto carved by the famous Coriveaux, at Paris, on his monument, in Westminster Abbey.

In public employments industrious and grave, 15
And alone with his friends, lord how merry was he!

V.

Now in equipage stately, now humbly on foot,
Both fortunes he try'd, but to neither would trust;
And whirl'd in the round as the wheel turn'd about,
He found riches had wings, and knew man was but dust.

VI.

This verse, little polish'd, though mighty sincere, 21
Sets neither his titles nor merit to view;
It says that his relics collected lie here,
And no mortal yet knows if this may be true. 24

VII.

Fierce robbers there are that infest the high-way,
So Matt may be kill'd, and his bones never found;
False witnesses at court, and fierce tempests at sea,
So Matt may yet chance to be hang'd or be drown'd.

VIII.

If his bones lie in earth, roll in sea, fly in air, 29
To Fate we must yield, and the thing is the same;
And if passing thou giv'st him a smile or a tear,
He cares not—yet pr'ythee be kind to his fame. 32



SOLOMON

ON THE

VANITY OF THE WORLD.

A POEM. IN THREE BOOKS.

PREFACE.

It is hard for a man to speak of himself with any tolerable satisfaction or success : he can be no more pleased in blaming himself, than in reading a satire made on him by another ; and though he may justly desire that a friend should praise him, yet, if he makes his own panegyric, he will get very few to read it. It is harder for him to speak of his own writings. An author is in the condition of a culprit ; the public are his judges : by allowing too much, and condescending too far, he may injure his own cause, and become a kind of *felo de se* ; and, by pleading and asserting too boldly, he may displease the court that sits upon him : his apology may only heighten his accusation. I would avoid these extremes ; and, though I grant it would not be very civil to trouble the reader with a long preface before he enters upon an indifferent poem, I would say something to persuade him to take it as it is, or to excuse it for not being better.

The noble images and reflections, the profound reasonings upon human actions, and excellent precepts for the government of life, which are found in the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and other books commonly attributed to Solomon, afford subjects for finer poems, in every kind, than have, I think, as yet appeared, in the Greek, Latin, or any modern language : how far they were verse in their original is a dissertation not to be entered into at present.

Out of this great treasure, which lies heaped up together in a confused magnificence, above all order, I had a mind to collect and digest such observations and apothegms as most particularly tend to the proof of that great assertion laid down in the beginning of the Ecclesiastes : All is vanity.

Upon the subject thus chosen, such various images present themselves to a writer's mind, that he must find it easier to judge what should be rejected than what ought to be received. The difficulty lies in drawing and disposing, or (as the painters term it) in grouping such a multitude of different objects, preserving still the justice and conformity of style and colouring, the *simplex duntaxat et unum*, which Horace prescribes as requisite to make the whole picture beautiful and perfect.

As precept, however true in theory, or useful in practice, would be but dry and tedious in verse, especially if the recital be long, I found it necessary to form some story, and give a kind of body to the poem. Under what species it may be comprehended, whether Didascalical or Heroic, I leave to the judgment of the critics, desiring them to be favourable in their censure, and not solicitous what the poem is called, provided it may be accepted.

The chief personage or character in the Epic is always proportioned to the design of the work, to carry on the narration and the moral. Homer intended to shew us, in his Iliad, that dissensions amongst great men obstruct the execution of the noblest enterprizes, and tend to the ruin of a state or kingdom. His Achilles, therefore, is haughty and passionate, impatient of any restraint by laws, and arrogant in arms. In his Odyssey, the same poet endeavours to explain that the hardest difficulties may be overcome by labour, and our fortune restored after the severest afflictions. Ulysses, therefore, is valiant, virtuous, and patient. Virgil's design was to tell us how, from a small colony established by the Trojans in Italy, the Roman empire rose, and from what ancient families Augustus (who was his prince and patron) descended. His hero, therefore, was to fight his way to the throne, still distinguished and protected by the favour of the gods. The poet, to this end, takes off from the vices of Achilles, and adds to the virtues of Ulysses, from both perfecting a character proper for his work, in the person of Æneas.

As Virgil copied after Homer, other epic poets have copied after them both. Tasso's *Gierusalemme Liberata* is directly

Troy town sacked, with this difference only, that the two chief characters in Homer, which the Latin poet had joined in one, the Italian has separated in his Godfrey and Rinaldo; but he makes them both carry on his work with very great success.—Ronsard's *Franciade*, (incomparably good as far as it goes) is again Virgil's *Æneis*. His hero comes from a foreign country, settles a colony, and lays the foundation of a future empire. I instance these as the greatest Italian and French poets in the epic. In our language, Spenser has not contented himself with this submissive manner of imitation; he launches out into very flowery paths, which still seem to conduct him into one great road. His *Fairy Queen* (had it been finished) must have ended in the account which every knight was to give of his adventures, and in the accumulated praises of his heroine Gloriana. The whole would have been an heroic poem, but in another cast and figure than any that had ever been written before.—Yet it is observable that every hero (as far as we can judge by the books still remaining) bears his distinguished character, and represents some particular virtue conducive to the whole design.

To bring this to our present subject. The pleasures of life do not compensate the miseries: age steals upon us unawares, and death, as the only cure of our ills, ought to be expected, but not feared. This instruction is to be illustrated by the action of some great person. Who, therefore, more proper for the business than Solomon himself? and why may he not be supposed now to repeat what, we take it for granted, he acted almost three thousand years since? If, in the fair situation where this prince was placed, he was acquainted with sorrow; if, endowed with the greatest perfections of nature, and possessed of all the advantages of external condition, he could not find happiness, the rest of mankind may safely take the monarch's word for the truth of what he asserts. And the author who would persuade that we should bear the ills of life patiently, merely because Solomon felt the same, has a better argument than Lucretius had, when, in his imperious way, he at once convinces and commands that we ought to submit to death without repining, because Epicurus did.

The whole poem is a soliloquy: Solomon is the person that speaks: he is at once the hero and the author; but he tells us very often what others say to him. Those chiefly introduced are his Rabbies and Philosophers in the first book, and his women and their attendants in the second: with these the sacred history mentions him to have conversed, as likewise with the angel brought down, in the third book, to help him out of his difficulties, or at least to teach him how to overcome them.

Nec Deus intersit nisi dignus vindice nodus,

I presume this poetical liberty may be very justly allowed me on so solemn an occasion.

In my description I have endeavoured to keep to the notions and manners of the Jewish nation at the time when Solomon lived; and where I allude to the customs of the Greeks, I believe I may be justified by the strictest chronology, though a poet is not obliged to the rules that confine an historian. Virgil has anticipated two hundred years, or the Trojan hero and Carthaginian queen could not have been brought together; and without the same anachronism several of the finest parts of his *Æneis* must have been omitted. Our countryman Milton goes yet further: he takes up many of his material images some thousands of years after the fall of man; nor could he otherwise have written, or we read, one of the sublimest pieces of invention that was ever yet produced. This likewise takes off the objection that some names of countries, terms of art, and notions in natural philosophy, are otherwise expressed than can be warranted by the geography or astronomy of Solomon's time. Poets are allowed the same liberty in their descriptions and comparisons, as painters in their draperies and ornaments: their personages may be dressed not exactly in the same habits which they wore, but in such as make them appear most graceful. In this case probability must atone for the want of truth. This liberty has, indeed, been abused by eminent masters in either science. Raphael and Tasso have shewed their discretion, where Paul Veronese and Ariosto are to answer for their

extravagancies. It is the excess, not the thing itself, that is blameable.

I would say one word of the measure in which this and most poems of the age are written. Heroic, with continued rhyme, as Donne and his contemporaries used it, carrying the sense of one verse most commonly into another, was found too dissolute and wild, and came very often too near prose. As Davenant and Waller corrected, and Dryden perfected it, it is too confined: it cuts off the sense at the end of every first line, which must always rhyme to the next following, and consequently produces too frequent an identity in the sound, and brings every couplet to the point of an epigram. It is, indeed, too broken and weak to convey the sentiments and represent the images proper for epic; and as it tires the writer while he composes, it must do the same to the reader while he repeats, especially in a poem of any considerable length.

If striking out into blank verse, as Milton did (and in this kind Mr. Phillips, had he lived, would have excelled) or running the thought into alternate and stanza, which allows a greater variety, and still preserves the dignity of the verse, as Spenser and Fairfax have done: if either of these, I say, be a proper remedy for my poetical complaint, or if any other may be found, I dare not determine: I am only inquiring in order to be better informed, without presuming to direct the judgment of others: and, while I am speaking of the verse itself, I give all just praise to many of my friends now living, who have in epic carried the harmony of their numbers as far as the nature of this measure will permit: but, once more, he that writes in rhymes dances in fetters; and as his chain is more extended, he may certainly take larger steps.

I need make no apology for the short digressive panegyric upon Great Britain in the first book: I am glad to have it observed, that there appears throughout all my verses a zeal for the honour of my country; and I had rather be thought a

good Englishman than the best poet or greatest scholar that ever wrote.

And now, as to the publishing of this piece; though I have in a literal sense observed Horace's *Nonum premater in annum*, yet have I by no means obeyed our poetical lawgiver, according to the spirit of the precept. The poem has, indeed, been written and laid aside much longer than the term prescribed; but, in the mean time, I had little leisure, and less inclination, to revise or print it. The frequent interruptions I have met with in my private studies, and great variety of public life in which I have been employed, my thoughts (such as they are) having generally been expressed in foreign language, and even formed by a habitude very different from what the beauty and elegance of English poetry requires; all these, and some other circumstances, which we had as good pass by at present, do justly contribute to make my excuse in this behalf very plausible. Far, indeed, from designing to print, I had locked up these papers in my 'scritoire, there to lie in peace till my executors might have taken them out. What altered this design, or how my 'scritoire came to be unlocked before my coffin was nailed, is the question. The true reason I take to be the best; many of my friends of the first quality, finest learning, and greatest understanding, have wrested the key from my hands by a very kind and irresistible violence; and the poem is published, not without my consent indeed, but a little against my opinion, and with an implicit submission to the partiality of their judgment. As I give up here the fruits of many of my vacant hours to their amusement and pleasure, I shall always think myself happy if I may dedicate my most serious endeavours to their interest and service: and I am proud to finish this preface by saying, that the violence of many enemies, whom I never justly offended, is abundantly recompensed by the goodness of more friends, whom I can never sufficiently oblige: and if I here assume the liberty of mentioning my Lord Harley and Lord Bathurst as the authors of this amicable confederacy, among all those whose names do

me great honour in the beginning of my book,* these two only ought to be angry with me ; for I disobey their positive order, whilst I make even this small acknowledgment of their particular kindness.

* The folio edition of 1718, to which is prefixed a most numerous list of honourable and celebrated names as subscribers.



KNOWLEDGE.

BOOK I.

Texts chiefly alluded to in this Book.

THE words of the Preacher, the son of David, king of Jerusalem, Eccles. chap. i. ver. 1.

Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity, ver. 2.

I communed with mine own heart, saying, Lo, I am come to great estate, and have gotten more wisdom than all they that have been before me in Jerusalem: yea, my heart hath had great experience of wisdom and knowledge, ver. 16.

He spake of trees, from the cedar-tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes, 1 Kings, chap. iv. ver. 33.

I know that whatsoever God doeth it shall be for ever; nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him, Eccles. chap. iii. ver. 14.

He hath made every thing beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart; so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end, Eccles. chap. iii. ver. 11.

For in much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow; chap. i. ver. 18.

And further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books there is no end: and much study is a weariness of the flesh, chap. xii. ver. 12.

SOLOMON, &c.

KNOWLEDGE.

BOOK I.

Ὁ Βίος γὰρ ὄνομα ἔχει, πόνος δ' ἔργῳ πέλει. *Eurip.*

Siquis Deus mihi largiatur, ut ex hac aetate repuerascam, et in cunis v^agiam, valde recusem.

Cic. de Senect.

The bewailing of man's miseries hath been elegantly and copiously set forth by many, in the writings as well of philosophers as divines; and it is both a pleasant and a profitable contemplation.

Lord Bacon's Advancement of Learning.

The Argument.

Solomon, seeking happiness from knowledge, convenes the learned men of his kingdom; requires them to explain to him the various operations and effects of Nature; discourses of vegetables, animals, and man; proposes some questions concerning the origin and situation of the habitable earth; proceeds to examine the system of the visible heaven; doubts if there may not be a plurality of worlds; inquires into the nature of spirits and angels; and wishes to be more fully informed as to the attributes of the Supreme Being. He is imperfectly answered by the Rabbins and Doctors; blames his own curiosity; and concludes that, as to human science, ALL IS VANITY.

YE sons of men with just regard attend,
Observe the preacher, and believe the friend,
Whose serious muse inspires him to explain
That all we act and all we think is vain:
That in this pilgrimage of seventy years, 5
O'er rocks of perils and thro' vales of tears
Destin'd to march, our doubtful steps we tend,
Tir'd with the toil, yet fearful of its end:
That from the womb we take our fatal shares
Of follies, passions, labours, tumults, cares; 10
And at approach of death shall only know
The truths which from these pensive numbers flow,
That we pursue false joy and suffer real woe.

Happiness! object of that waking dream
Which we call life, mistaking; fugitive theme 15
Of my pursuing verse: ideal shade,
Notional good; by fancy only made,
And by tradition nurs'd; fallacious fire,
Whose dancing beams mislead our fond desire;
Cause of our care, and error of our mind; 20
Oh! hadst thou ever been by Heav'n design'd
To Adam, and his mortal race, the boon
Entire had been reserv'd for Solomon;
On me the partial lot had been bestow'd,
And in my cup the golden draught had flow'd. 25

But, O! ere yet orig'nal man was made,
Ere the foundations of this earth were laid,
It was opponent to our search ordain'd,
That joy still sought should never be attain'd:
This sad experience cites me to reveal, 30
And what I dictate is from what I feel.

Born, as I was, great David's fav'rite son,
Dear to my people on the Hebrew throne,
Sublime my court, with Ophir's treasures blest,
My name extended to the farthest east, 35
My body cloth'd with ev'ry outward grace,
Strength in my limbs, and beauty in my face,
My shining thought with fruitful notions crown'd,
Quick my invention, and my judgment sound;
Arise, (I commun'd with myself) arise, 40
Think to be happy; to be great be wise;
Content of spirit must from science flow,
For 'tis a godlike attribute to know.

I said, and sent my edict thro' the land;
Around my throne the letter'd Rabbins stand; 45
Historic leaves revolve, long volumes spread,
The old discoursing as the younger read!

Attent I heard, propos'd my doubts, and said:

The vegetable world, each plant and tree,
Its seed, its name, its nature, its degree, 50
I am allow'd, as Fame reports, to know,
From the fair cedar on the craggy brow

Of Lebanon nodding supremely tall,
 To creeping moss, and hyssop on the wall;
 Yet just and conscious to myself, I find 55
 A thousand doubts oppose the searching mind.
 I know not why the beech delights the glade,
 With boughs extended and a rounder shade,
 Whilst tow'ring firs in conic forms arise,
 And with a pointed spear divide the skies; 60
 Nor why again the changing oak should shed
 The yearly honour of his stately head,
 Whilst the distinguish'd yew is ever seen
 Unchang'd his branch, and permanent his green;
 Wanting the sun why does the caltha fade? 65
 Why does the cypress flourish in the shade?
 The fig and date, why love they to remain
 In middle station and an even plain,
 While in the lower marsh the gourd is found,
 And while the hill with olive-shade is crown'd? 70
 Why does one climate and one soil endue
 The blushing poppy with a crimson hue,
 Yet leave the lily pale, and tinge the violet blue?
 Why does the fond carnation love to shoot
 A various colour from one parent root, 75
 While the fantastic tulip strives to break
 In twofold beauty and a parted streak?
 The twining jasmine and the blushing rose
 With lavish grace their morning scents disclose;
 The smelling tuberose and jonquil declare, 80
 The stronger impulse of an evening air.
 Whence has the tree (resolve me) or the flow'r
 A various instinct or a diff'rent pow'r? [breath,
 Why should one earth, one clime, one stream, one
 Raise this to strength, and sicken that to death? 85
 Whence does it happen that the plant, which well
 We name the sensitive, should move and feel?
 Whence know her leaves to answer her command,
 And with quick horror fly the neighb'ring hand?
 Along the sunny bank or wat'ry mead 90
 Ten thousand stalks their various blossoms spread;

Peaceful and lowly, in their native soil,
They neither know to spin nor care to toil,
Yet with confess'd magnificence deride
Our vile attire and impotence of pride. 95
The cowslip smiles in brighter yellow drest
Than that which veils the nubile virgin's breast;
A fairer red stands blushing in the rose
Than that which on the bridegroom's vestment flows.
Take but the humblest lily of the field, 100
And if our pride will to our reason yield,
It must by sure comparison be shown,
That on the regal seat great David's son,
Array'd in all his robes and types of pow'r,
Shines with less glory than that simple flow'r. 105

Of fishes next, my friends, I would enquire :
How the mute race engender or respire,
From the small fry that glide on Jordan's stream
Unmark'd, a multitude without a name,
To that leviathan, who o'er the seas 110
Immense rolls onward his impetuous ways,
And mocks the wind, and in the tempest plays?
How they in warlike bands march greatly forth,
From freezing waters and the colder north,
To southern climes directing their career, 115
Their station changing with th' inverted year?
How all with careful knowledge are endu'd,
To chuse their proper bed, and wave, and food;
To guard their spawn, and educate their brood?

Of birds, how each, according to her kind, 120
Proper materials for her nest can find,
And build a frame which deepest thought in man
Would or amend or imitate in vain?
How in small flights they know to try their young,
And teach the callow child her parent's song? 125
Why these frequent the plain, and those the wood?
Why ev'ry land has her specific brood?
Where the tall crane or winding swallow goes,
Fearful of gathering winds and falling snows;
If into rocks or hollow trees they creep, 130
In temporary death confin'd to sleep,

Or, conscious of the coming evil, fly
To milder regions and a southern sky?

Of beasts and creeping insects shall we trace
The wondrous nature and the various race; 135
Or wild or tame, or friend to man or foe,
Of us what they or what of them we know?

Tell me, ye Studios! who pretend to see
Far into Nature's bosom, whence the bee
Was first inform'd her vent'rous flight to steer 140
Thro' trackless paths and an abyss of air?

Whence she avoids the slimy marsh, and knows
The fertile hills, where sweeter herbage grows,
And honey-making flow'rs their opening buds disclose?
How, from the thicken'd mist and setting sun 145
Finds she the labour of her day is done?

Who taught her against winds and rains to strive,
To bring her burden to the certain hive,
And thro' the liquid fields again to pass
Duteous, and hark'ning to the sounding brass? 150

And, O thou Sluggard! tell me why the ant,
'Midst summer's plenty, thinks of winter's want,
By constant journies careful to prepare
Her stores, and bringing home the corny ear,
By what instruction does she bite the grain, 155
Lest hid in earth, and taking root again,
It might elude the foresight of her care?
Distinct in either insect's deed appear

The marks of thought, contrivance, hope, and fear.

Fix thy corporeal and internal eye 160
On the young gnat or new-engender'd fly,
Or the vile worm, that yesterday began
To crawl, thy fellow-creatures, abject man!

Like thee they breathe, they move, they taste, they see,
They show their passions by their acts like thee; 165
Darting their stings, they previously declare
Design'd revenge, and fierce intent of war:

Laying their eggs, they evidently prove
The genial pow'r and full effect of love.

Each then has organs to digest his food, 170
One to beget, and one receive the brood;

Has limbs and sinews, blood, and heart, and brain,
Life and her proper functions to sustain,
Tho' the whole fabric smaller than a grain.
What more can our penurious reason grant 175
To the large whale or castled elephant?
To those enormous terrors of the Nile,
The crested snake and long-tail'd crocodile,
Than that all differ but in shape and name,
Each destin'd to a less or larger frame? 180

For potent Nature loves a various act,
Prone to enlarge, or studious to contract;
Now forms her work too small, now too immense,
And scorns the measures of our feeble sense.
The object, spread too far, or rais'd too high, 185
Denies its real image to the eye;
Too little, it eludes the dazzled sight,
Becomes mixt blackness or unparted light.
Water and air the varied form confound;
The straight looks crooked, and the square grows round.

Thus while with fruitless hope and weary pain 191
We seek great nature's pow'r, but seek in vain,
Safe sits the goddess in her dark retreat,
Around her myriads of ideas wait,
And endless shapes, which the mysterious queen 195
Can take or quit, can alter or retain,
As from our lost pursuit she wills to hide
Her close decrees, and chasten human pride.

Untam'd and fierce the tiger still remains:
He tires his life in biting on his chains: 200
For the kind gifts of water and of food
Ungrateful, and returning ill for good,
He seeks his keeper's flesh and thirsts his blood:
While the strong camel and the gen'rous horse,
Restrain'd and aw'd by man's inferior force, 205
Do to the riders will their rage submit,
And answer to the spur, and own the bit;
Stretch their glad mouths to meet the feeder's hand,
Pleas'd with his weight, and proud of his command.

Again: the lonely fox roams far abroad, 210
On secret rapine bent and midnight fraud;

Now haunts the cliff, now traverses the lawn,
 And flies the hated neighbourhood of man;
 While the kind spaniel and the faithful hound,
 Likest that fox in shape and species found, 215
 Refuses thro' these cliffs and lawns to roam,
 Pursues the noted path, and covets home,
 Does with kind joy domestic faces meet,
 Takes what the glutton child denies to eat,
 And dying, licks his long-lov'd master's feet. 220

By what immediate cause they are inclin'd,
 In many acts, 'tis hard I own to find.
 I see in others, or I think I see,
 That strict their principles and ours agree.
 Evil, like us, they shun and covet good, 225
 Abhor the poison, and receive the food:
 Like us they love or hate; like us they know
 To joy the friend, or grapple with the foe,
 With seeming thought their action they intend,
 And use the means proportion'd to the end. 230
 Then vainly the philosopher avers
 That reason guides our deed and instinct theirs.
 How can we justly diff'rent causes frame,
 When the effects entirely are the same?
 Instinct and reason how can we divide? 235

'Tis the fool's ignorance and the pedant's pride.
 With the same folly sure man vaunts his sway
 If the brute beast refuses to obey.
 For, tell me, when the empty boaster's word
 Proclaims himself the universal lord, 240
 Does he not tremble lest the lion's paw
 Should join his plea against the fancy'd law?
 Would not the learned coward leave the chair,
 If in the schools or porches should appear
 The fierce hyæna or the foaming bear? 245

The combatant too late the field declines,
 When now the sword is girded to his loins.
 When the swift vessel flies before the wind,
 Too late the sailor views the land behind:
 And 'tis too late now back again to bring 250
 Inquiry, rais'd and tow'ring on the wing;

Forward she strives, averſe to be withheld
From nobler objects and a larger field.

Conſider with me this etherial ſpace,
Yielding to earth and ſea the middle place : 255

Anxious I aſk ye how the penſile ball
Should never ſtrive to riſe nor never fear to fall ?
When I reflect how the revolving ſun
Does round our globe his crooked journies run,
I doubt of many lands if they contain 260

Or herd or beaſt, or colonies of man ;
If any nation paſs their deſtin'd days
Beneath the neighb'ring ſun's director rays ;
If any ſuffer on the polar coaſt
The rage of Arctos and eternal froſt. 265

May not the pleaſure of Omnipotence
To each of theſe ſome ſecret good diſpenſe ?
Thoſe who amidſt the torrid regions live
May they not gales unknown to us receive ?
See daily ſhow'rs rejoice the thirſty earth, 270

And bleſs the flow'ry buds ſucceeding birth ?
May they not pity us condemn'd to bear
The various heav'n of an obliquer ſphere,
While, by fix'd laws, and with a juſt return, 274

They feel twelve hours that ſhade for twelve that burn,
And praife the neighb'ring ſun, whoſe conſtant flame
Enlightens them with ſeaſons ſtill the ſame ?

And may not thoſe whoſe diſtant lot is caſt
North, beyond Tartary's extended waſte,
Where thro' the plains of one continual day 280

Six ſhining months purſue their even way,
And fix ſucceeding urge their duſky flight,
Obſcur'd with vapours, and o'erwhelm'd in night.

May not, I aſk, the natives of theſe climes
(As annals may inform ſucceeding times) 285

To our quotidian change of heaven prefer
Their own viciffitude and equal ſhare
Of day and night diſparted thro' the year ?

May they not ſcorn our ſun's repeated race,
To narrow bounds preſcrib'd and little ſpace, 290

Hast'ning from morn, and headlong driv'n from noon,
 Half of our daily toil yet scarcely done ?
 May they not justly to our climes upbraid
 Shortness of night and penury of shade,
 That ere our weary'd limbs are justly blest 295
 With wholesome sleep and necessary rest,
 Another sun demands return of care,
 The remnant toil of yesterday to bear ?
 Whilst, when the solar beams salute their sight,
 Bold and secure in half a year of light, 300
 Uninterrupted voyages they take
 To the remotest wood and farthest lake,
 Manage the fishing, and pursue the course
 With more extended nerves and more continu'd force ;
 And when declining day forsakes their sky, 305
 When gath'ring clouds speak gloomy winter nigh,
 With plenty for the coming season blest'd,
 Six solid months (an age) they live, releas'd
 From all the labour, process, clamour, woe,
 Which our sad scenes of daily action know ; 310
 They light the shining lamp, prepare the feast,
 And with full mirth receive the welcome guest,
 Or tell their tender loves (the only care
 Which now they suffer) to the list'ning fair,
 And rais'd in pleasure, or repos'd in ease, 315
 (Grateful alternates of substantial peace)
 They bless the long nocturnal influence shed
 On the crown'd goblet and the genial bed.
 In foreign isles which our discov'ers find,
 Far from this length of continent disjoin'd, 320
 The rugged bear's or spotted lynx's brood
 Frighten the vallies and infest the wood,
 The hungry crocodile and hissing snake
 Lurk in the troubled stream and fenny brake ;
 And man, untaught, and rav'nous as the beast, 325
 Does valley, wood, and brake, and stream, infest ;
 Deriv'd these men and animals their birth
 From trunk of oak or pregnant womb of earth ?
 Whence then the old belief, that all began
 In Eden's shade and one created man ? 330

Or grant this progeny was wafted o'er
By coasting boats from next adjacent shore,
Would those, from whom we will suppose they spring,
Slaughter to harmless lands and poison bring?
Would they on board or bears or lynxes take, 335
Feed the she-adder and the brooding snake?
Or could they think the new-discover'd isle
Pleas'd to receive a pregnant crocodile?

And since the savage lineage we must trace
From Noah sav'd and his distinguish'd race, 340
How should their fathers happen to forget
The arts which Noah taught, the rules he set,
To sow the glebe, to plant the gen'rous vine,
And load with grateful flames the holy shrine?
While the great fire's unhappy son's are found, 345
Unpress'd their vintage, and untill'd their ground,
Straggling o'er dale and hill in quest of food,
And rude of arts, of virtue, and of God.

How shall we next o'er earth and seas pursue
The vary'd forms of ev'ry thing we view; 350
That all is chang'd, tho' all is still the same,
Fluid the parts, yet durable the frame?
Of those materials which have been confest
The pristine springs and parents of the rest,
Each becomes other. Water stopp'd gives birth 355
To grass and plants, and thickens into earth;
Diffus'd it rises in a higher sphere,
Dilates its drops, and softens into air:
Those finer parts of air again aspire,
Move into warmth, and brighten into fire; 360
That fire once more, by thicker air o'ercome,
And downward forc'd in earth's capacious womb,
Alters its particles, is fire no more,
But lies resplendent dust and shining ore;
Or, running thro' the mighty mother's veins, 365
Changes its shape, puts off its old remains;
With wat'ry parts its lessen'd force divides,
Flows into waves, and rises into tides.

Disparted streams shall from their channels fly,
And deep furcharg'd by sandy mountains lie 370

Obscurely sepulcher'd. By beating rain
 And furious wind, down to the distant plain
 The hill that hides his head above the skies
 Shall fall: the plain by slow degrees shall rise
 Higher than erst had stood the summit hill; 375
 For Time must Nature's great behest fulfil.

Thus by a length of years and change of fate
 All things are light or heavy, small or great;
 Thus Jordan's waves shall future clouds appear,
 And Egypt's pyramids refine to air; 380
 Thus later age shall ask for Pison's flood,
 And travellers inquire where Babel stood.

Now, where we see these changes often fall,
 Sedate we pass them by as natural;
 Where to our eye more rarely they appear, 385
 The pompous name of Prodigy they bear:
 Let active thought these close meanders trace,
 Let human wit their dubious bound'ries place.
 Are all things miracle, or nothing such?
 And prove we not too little or too much? 390

For that a branch cut off, a wither'd rod,
 Should at a word pronounc'd revive and bud,
 Is this more strange than that the mountain's brow,
 Stripp'd by December's frost, and white with snow,
 Should push in spring ten thousand thousand buds, 395
 And boast returning leaves and blooming woods?
 That each successive night from op'ning heav'n
 The food of angels should to man be giv'n?
 Is this more strange than that with common bread
 Our fainting bodies ev'ry day are fed? 400
 Than that each grain and seed consum'd in earth,
 Raises its store, and multiplies its birth!

And from the handful which the tiller sows
 The labour'd fields rejoice, and future harvest flows?
 Then from whate'er we can to sense produce 405
 Common and plain, or wond'rous and abstruse,
 From Nature's constant or eccentric laws
 The thoughtful soul this gen'ral influence draws,
 That an effect must pre-suppose a cause:

And while she does her upward flight sustain,
Touching each link of the continu'd chain,
At length she is oblig'd and forc'd to see
A first, a source, a life, a Deity ;
What has for ever been, and must for ever be.

▪ This great existence thus by reason found,
Blest by all pow'r, with all perfection crown'd,
How can we bind or limit his decree

By what our ear has heard, or eye may see?
Say then is all in heaps of water lost,
Beyond the islands and the midland coast ?

Or has that God who gave our world its birth
Sever'd those waters by some other earth,
Countries by future ploughshares to be torn,
And cities rais'd by nations yet unborn !

Ere the progressive course of restless age
Performs three thousand times its annual stage,
May not our pow'r and learning be suppress'd,
And arts and empire learn to travel west ?

Where, by the strength of this idea charm'd,
Lighten'd with glory, and with rapture warm'd,
Ascends my soul ! what sees she white and great
Amidst subjected seas ? An isle, the seat

Of pow'r and plenty, her imperial throne,
For justice and for mercy sought and known ;
Virtues sublime, great attributes of heav'n,

From thence to this distinguish'd nation giv'n :
Yet farther west the western isle extends

Her happy fame ; her armed fleets she sends
To climates folded yet from human eye,
And lands which we imagine wave and sky ;

From pole to pole she hears her acts resound,
And rules an empire by no ocean bound ;
Knows her ships anchor'd, and her sails unfurl'd,
In other Indies and a second world.

Long shall Britannia (that must be her name)
Be first in conquest, and preside in fame :
Long shall her favour'd monarchy engage
The teeth of Envy and the force of Age ;

Rever'd and happy, she shall long remain
Of human things least changeable, least vain; 450
Yet all must with the gen'ral doom comply,
And this great glorious pow'r tho' last must die.

Now let us leave this earth, and lift our eye
To the large convex of yon' azure sky:
Behold it like an ample curtain spread, 455
Now streak'd and glowing with the morning red;
Anon at noon in flaming yellow bright,
And chusing fable for the peaceful night.

Ask Reason now whence light and shade were giv'n,
And whence this great variety of heav'n? 460
Reason our guide, what can she more reply,
Than that the sun illuminates the sky?
Than that night rises from his absent ray,
And his returning lustre kindles day?

But we expect the morning red in vain, 465
'Tis hid in vapours or obscur'd by rain:
The noontide yellow we in vain require,
'Tis black in storm, or red in lightning fire.
Pitchy and dark the night sometimes appears,
Friend to our woe, and parent of our fears; 470
Our joy and wonder sometimes she excites,
With stars unnumber'd and eternal lights.

Send forth, ye wise, send forth your lab'ring thought,
Let it return, with empty notions fraught
Of airy columns ev'ry moment broke, 475
Of circling whirlpools, and of spheres of smoke;
Yet this solution but once more affords
New change of terms and scaffolding of words;
In other garb my question I receive,
And take the doubt the very same I gave. 480

Lo! as a giant strong, the lusty sun
Multiply'd rounds in one great round does run,
Two-fold his course, yet constant his career,
Changing the day, and finishing the year:
Again, when his descending orb retires, 485
And earth perceives the absence of his fires,
The moon affords us her alternate ray,
And with kind beams distributes fainter day,

Yet keeps the stages of her monthly race,
Various her beams, and changeable her face ; 490
Each planet shining in his proper sphere
Does with just speed his radiant voyage steer ;
Each sees his lamp with diff'rent lustre crown'd ;
Each knows his course with diff'rent periods bound,
And in his passage thro' the liquid space, 495

Nor hastens nor retards his neighbour's race,
Now shine these planets with substantial rays ?
Does innate lustre gild their measur'd days ?
Or do they (as your schemes I think have shown)
Dart furtive beams and glory not their own, 500
All servants to that source of light, the sun ?

Again ; I see ten thousand thousand stars,
Nor cast in lines, in circles, nor in squares,
(Poor rules with which our bounded mind is fill'd
When we would plant, or cultivate, or build) 505
But shining with such vast, such various light,
As speaks the hand that form'd them infinite.

How mean the order and perfection sought
In the best product of the human thought,
Compar'd to the great harmony that reigns 510
In what the Spirit of the world ordains !

Now if the sun to earth transmits his ray,
Yet does not scorch us with too fierce a day,
How small a portion of his pow'r is giv'n
To orbs more distant and remoter heav'n ? 515

And of those stars which our imperfect eye
Has doom'd and fix'd to one eternal sky,
Each by a native stock of honour great,
May dart strong influence, and diffuse kind heat,
Itself a sun, and with transmissive light 520

Enlivens worlds deny'd to human sight ;
Around the circles of their ambient skies
New moons may grow or wane, may set or rise,
And other stars may to those suns be earths,
Give their own elements their proper births, 525
Divide their climes, or elevate their pole,
See their lands flourish, and their oceans roll ;

Yet these great orbs, thus radically bright,
 Primitive founts, and origins of light,
 May each to other (as their diff'rent sphere 530
 Makes or their distance or their height appear
 Be seen a nobler or inferior star,
 And in that space which we call air and sky,
 Myriads of earths, and moons, and suns may lie
 Unmeasur'd, and unknown by human eye. 535

In vain we measure this amazing sphere,
 And find and fix its centre here or there,
 Whilst its circumf'rence, scorning to be brought
 E'en into fancy'd space, illudes our vanquish'd
 thought.

Where then are all the radiant monsters driv'n 540
 With which your guesses fill'd the frighten'd heav'n?
 Where will their fictitious images remain?
 In paper schemes, and the Chaldean's brain?

This problem yet, this offspring of a guess,
 Let us for once a child of Truth confess; 545
 That these fair stars, these objects of delight
 And terror to our searching dazzled sight,
 Are worlds immense, unnumber'd, infinite;
 But do these worlds display their beams, or guide
 Their orbs, to serve thy use, to please thy pride? 550
 Thyself but dust, thy stature but a span,
 A moment thy duration, foolish man?

As well may the minutest emmet say
 That Caucasus was rais'd to pave his way;
 The snail, that Lebanon's extended wood 555
 Was destin'd only for his walk and food;
 The vilest cockle, gaping on the coast,
 That rounds the ample seas, as well may boast
 The craggy rock projects above the sky,
 That he in safety at its foot may lie; 560
 And the whole ocean's confluent waters swell,
 Only to quench his thirst, or move and blanch
 his shell.

A higher flight the vent'rous goddess tries,
 Leaving material worlds and local skies;

Inquires what are the beings, where the space, 565
That form'd and held the angels' ancient race?
For rebel Lucifer with Michael fought,
(I offer only what Tradition taught)
Embattl'd cherub against cherub rose,
Did shield to shield and pow'r to pow'r oppose; 570
Heav'n rung with triumph, hell was fill'd with woes.
What were these forms, of which your volumes tell
How some fought great, and others recreant fell?
These bound to bear an everlasting load,
Durance of chain, and banishment of God; 575
By fatal turns their wretched strength to tire,
To swim in sulph'rous lakes, or land on solid fire;
While those, exalted to primeval light,
Excess of blessing, and supreme delight,
Only perceive some little pause of joys, 580
In those great moments when their God employs
Their ministry to pour his threaten'd hate
On the proud king or the rebellious state;
Or to reverse Jehovah's high command,
And speak the thunder falling from his hand, 585
When to his duty the proud king returns,
And the rebellious state in ashes mourns?
How can good angels be in heav'n confin'd,
Or view that Presence which no space can bind?
Is God above, beneath, or yon', or here? 590
He who made all, is he not ev'ry where?
Oh! how can wicked angels find a night
So dark to hide 'em from that piercing light
Which form'd the eye, and gave the pow'r of sight?
What mean I now of angel, when I hear 595
Firm body, spirit pure, or fluid air?
Spirits, to action spiritual confin'd
Friends to our thought, and kindred to our mind,
Should only act and prompt us from within,
Nor by external eye be ever seen. 600
Was it not therefore to our fathers known
That these had appetite, and limb, and bone?

Else how could Abram wash their weary'd feet,
 Or Sarah please their taste with sav'ry meat?
 Whence should they fear? or why did Lot engage
 To save their bodies from abusive rage? 606
 And how could Jacob, in a real fight,
 Feel or resist the wrestling angel's might?
 How could a form its strength with matter try?
 Or how a spirit touch a mortal's thigh? 610

Now are they air condens'd, or gather'd rays?
 How guide they then our pray'r or keep our ways,
 By stronger blasts still subject to be tost,
 By tempests scatter'd, and in whirlwinds lost?
 Have they again (as sacred song proclaims) 615
 Substances real, and existing frames?
 How comes it, since with them we jointly share
 The great effect of one Creator's care,
 That whilst our bodies sicken and decay,
 Theirs are for ever healthy, young, and gay? 620
 Why, whilst we struggle in this vale beneath
 With want and sorrow, with disease and death,
 Do they more blest'd perpetual life employ
 On songs of pleasure and in scenes of joy?

Now, when my mind has all this world survey'd,
 And found that nothing by itself was made; 626
 When thought has rais'd itself by just degrees,
 From vallies crown'd with flow'rs, and hills with trees,
 From smoking min'rals, and from rising streams,
 From fatt'ning Nilus, or victorious Thames; 630
 From all the living that four-footed move
 Along the shore, the meadow, or the grove;
 From all that can with fins or feathers fly
 Thro' the aerial or the wat'ry sky;
 From the poor reptile with a reas'ning soul, 635
 That miserable master of the whole;
 From this great object of the body's eye,
 This fair half-round, this ample azure sky,
 Terribly large, and wonderfully bright,
 With stars unnumber'd, and unmeasur'd light: 640
 From essences unseen, celestial names,
 Enlight'ning spirits, and ministerial flames,

Angels, Dominions, Potentates, and Thrones,
All that in each degree the name of creature owns :
Lift we our reason to that sov'reign cause 645
Who blest the whole with life, and bounded it with laws;
Who forth from nothing call'd this comely frame,
His will and act, his word and work the same ;
To whom a thousand years are but a day ;
Who bade the Light her genial beams display, 650
And set the moon, and taught the sun his way ;
Who waking Time, his creature, from the source
Primeval, order'd his predestin'd course,
Himself, as in the hollow of his hand,
Holding, obedient to his high command, 655
The deep abyfs, the long continu'd store,
Where months, and days, and hours, and minutes, pour
Their floating parts, and thenceforth are no more :
This Alpha and Omega, First and Last,
Who, like the potter, in a mould has cast 660
The world's great frame, commanding it to be
Such as the eyes of Sense and Reason see ;
Yet if he wills may change or spoil the whole,
May take yon' beauteous, myftic, ftarry roll,
And burn it like an ufelefs parchment scroll ; 665
May from its basis in one moment pour
This melted earth—
Like liquid metal, and like burning ore ;
Who, fole in pow'r, at the beginning faid,
Let fea, and air, and earth, and heav'n, be made, 670
And it was fo—And when he fhall ordain
In other fort, has but to fpeak again,
And they fhall be no more : of this great theme,
This glorious, hallow'd, everlafting Name,
This God, I would difcource— 675
The learned Elders fat appall'd, amaz'd,
And each with mutual look on other gaz'd ;
Nor fpeech they meditate, nor answer frame ;
Too plain, alas ! their f Silence fpake their fhame ;
Till one in whom an outward mien appear'd 680
And turn fuperior to the vulgar herd,

Began: That human learning's furthest reach
 Was but to note the doctrines I could teach;
 That mine to speak, and theirs was to obey,
 For I in knowledge more than pow'r did sway, 685
 And the astonish'd world in me beheld
 Moses eclips'd, and Jesse's son excell'd.
 Humble a second bow'd, and took the word,
 Foresaw my name by future age ador'd;
 O live, said he, thou wisest of the wise; 690
 As none has equall'd, none shall ever rise
 Excelling thee—

Parent of wicked, bane of honest deeds,
 Pernicious Flatt'ry! thy malignant seeds
 In an ill hour, and by a fatal hand, 695
 Sadly diffus'd o'er Virtue's gleby land,
 With rising pride amidst the corn appear,
 And choke the hopes and harvest of the year.

And now the whole perplex'd ignoble crowd,
 Mute to my questions, in my praises loud, 700
 Echo'd the word: whence things arose, or how
 They thus exist, the aptest nothing know:
 What yet is not, but is ordain'd to be,
 All veil of doubt apart, the dullest see.

My Prophets and my Sophists finish'd here 705
 Their civil efforts of the verbal war:
 Not so my Rabbins and Logicians yield;
 Retiring, still they combat: from the field
 Of open arms unwilling they depart,
 And sculk behind the subterfuge of art. 710
 To speak one thing mix'd dialects they join,
 Divide the simple, and the plain define;
 Fix fancy'd laws, and form imagin'd rules,
 Terms of their art, and jargon of their schools,
 Ill-grounded maxims, by false gloss enlarg'd, 715
 And captious science against reason charg'd.

Soon their crude notions with each other fought;
 The adverse sect deny'd what this had taught;
 And he at length the amplest triumph gain'd
 Who contradicted what the last maintain'd. 720

O wretched impotence of human mind!
We, erring, still excuse for error find,
And darkling grope, not knowing we are blind.

Vain man! since first the blushing fire essay'd
His folly with connected leaves to shade, 725
How does the crime of thy resembling race,
With like attempt, that pristine error trace?
Too plain thy nakedness of soul espy'd,
Why dost thou strive the conscious shame to hide,
By masks of eloquence and veils of pride? 730

With outward smiles their flatt'ry I receiv'd,
Own'd my sick mind by their discourse reliev'd;
But bent, and inward to myself, again
Perplex'd, these matters I revolv'd in vain.
My search still tir'd, my labour still renew'd, 735
At length I Ignorance and Knowledge view'd
Impartial; both in equal balance laid, [weigh'd.
Light flew the knowing scale, the doubtful heavy

Forc'd by reflective reason, I confess
That human science is uncertain guess. 740
Alas! we grasp at clouds, and beat the air,
Vexing that spirit we intend to clear.

Can thought beyond the bounds of matter climb?
Or who shall tell me what is space or time?
In vain we lift up our presumptuous eyes 745
To what our Maker to their ken denies:
The searcher follows fast, the object faster flies.
The little which imperfectly we find
Seduces only the bewilder'd mind
To fruitless search of something yet behind. 750
Various discussions tear our heated brain:
Opinions often turn; still doubts remain;
And who indulges thought increases pain.

How narrow limits were to Wisdom giv'n?
Earth she surveys; she thence would measure heav'n:
Thro' mists obscure now wings her tedious way, 756
Now wanders, dazzled with too bright a day,
And from the summit of a pathless coast
Sees infinite, and in that sight is lost.

Remember that the curs'd desire to know, 760
Offspring of Adam, was thy source of woe ;
Why wilt thou then renew the vain pursuit,
And rashly catch at the forbidden fruit ?
With empty labour and eluded strife
Seeking by knowledge to attain to life, 765
For ever from that fatal tree debarr'd,
Which flaming swords and angry cherubs guard. 767



PLEASURE.

BOOK II.

Texts chiefly alluded to in this Book.

I said in mine heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure, Eccles. chap. ii. ver. 1.

I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards, ver. 4.

I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all kinds of fruits, ver. 5.

I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees, ver. 6.

Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun, ver. 11.

I gat me men-singers, and women-singers, and the delights of the sons of men, as musical instruments, and that of all sorts, ver. 8.

I sought in mine heart to give myself unto wine (yet acquainting mine heart with wisdom) and to lay hold on folly, till I might see what was that good for the sons of men which they should do under the heaven all the days of their life, ver. 3.

Then said I in my heart, As it happeneth to the fool, so it happeneth even to me: and why was I then more wise? Then I said in my heart, that this also is vanity, Eccles. chap. ii. ver. 15.

Therefore I hated life, because the work that is wrought under the sun is grievous unto me, chap. ii. ver. 17.

Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary to send forth a stinking savour, so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honour, chap. x. ver. 1.

The memory of the just is blessed; but the name of the wicked shall rot, Prou. chap. x. ver. 7.

PLEASURE.

BOOK II.

The Argument.

Solomon, again seeking happiness, inquires if wealth and greatness can produce it: begins with the magnificence of gardens and buildings; the luxury of music and feasting; and proceeds to the hopes and desires of love. In two episodes are shewn the follies and troubles of that passion. Solomon, still disappointed, falls under the temptations of libertinism and idolatry; recovers his thought; reasons aright; and concludes that, as to the pursuit of pleasure and sensual delight, **ALL IS VANITY AND VEXATION OF SPIRIT.**

TRY then, O Man, the moments to deceive
 That from the womb attend thee to the grave:
 For weary'd Nature find some apter scheme;
 Health be thy hope, and pleasure be thy theme:
 From the perplexing and unequal ways 5
 Where Study brings thee; from the endless maze
 Which Doubt persuades to run, forewarn'd, recede
 To the gay field, and flow'ry path, that lead
 To jocund mirth, soft joy, and careless ease:
 Forsake what may instruct for what may please: 10
 Essay amusing art and proud expence,
 And make thy reason subject to thy sense.

I commun'd thus: the pow'r of wealth I try'd,
 And all the various luxe of costly pride;
 Artists and plans reliev'd my solemn hours: 15
 I founded palaces and planted bow'rs,
 Birds, fishes, beasts, of each exotic kind
 I to the limits of my court confin'd,
 To trees transferr'd I gave a second birth,
 And bid a foreign shade grace Judah's earth. 20
 Fish-ponds were made where former forests grew,
 And hills were levell'd to extend the view.
 Rivers, diverted from their native course,
 And bound with chains of artificial force,
 From large cascades in pleasing tumult roll'd, 25
 Or rose thro' figur'd stone or breathing gold.

From furthest Africa's tormented womb
The marble brought, erects the spacious dome,
Or forms the pillars long-extended rows,
On which the planted grove and penfile garden grows.

The workmen here obey the master's call, 31
To gild the turret and to paint the wall;
To mark the pavement there with various stone,
And on the jasper steps to rear the throne:
The spreading cedar, that an age had stood, 35
Supreme of trees, and mistress of the wood,
Cut down and carv'd, my shining roof adorns,
And Lebanon his ruin'd honour mourns.

A thousand artists shew their cunning pow'r
To raise the wonders of the iv'ry tow'rs: 40
A thousand maidens ply the purple loom
To weave the bed and deck the regal room;
Till Tyre confesses her exhausted store,
That on her coast the murex * is no more;
Till from the Parian isle and Liby's coast 45
The mountains grieve their hopes of marble lost;
And India's woods return their just complaint,
Their brood decay'd, and want of elephant.

My full design with vast expence achiev'd,
I came, beheld, admir'd, reflected, griev'd: 50
I chid the folly of my thoughtless haste,
For, the work perfected, the joy was past.

To my new courts sad Thought did still repair,
And round my gilded roofs hung hov'ring Care.
In vain on silken beds I sought repose, 55
And restless oft from purple couches rose;
Vexatious Thought still found my flying mind,
Nor bound by limits nor to place confin'd:
Haunted my nights, and terrify'd my days,
Stalk'd thro' my gardens, and pursu'd my ways, 60
Nor shut from artful bow'r, nor lost in winding maze.

Yet take thy bent, my Soul; another sense
Indulge: add music to magnificence:

* The murex is a shell-fish, of the liquor whereof a purple colour is made.

Essay if harmony may grief control,
Or pow'r of sound prevail upon the soul. 65
Often our seers and poets have confest
That music's force can tame the furious beast;
Can make the wolf or foaming boar restrain
His rage, the lion drop his crested main,
Attentive to the song; the lynx forget 70
His wrath to man, and lick the minstrel's feet.
Are we, alas! less savage yet than these?
Else music sure may human cares appease.

I spake my purpose, and the cheerful choir
Parted their shares of harmony: the lyre 75
Softened the timbrel's noise; the trumpet's sound
Provok'd the Dorian flute, (both sweeter found
When mix'd) the fife the viol's notes refin'd,
And ev'ry strength with ev'ry grace was join'd:
Each morn they wak'd me with a sprightly lay; 80
Of op'ning heav'n they sung and gladsome day:
Each ev'ning their repeated skill exprest
Scenes of repose and images of rest;
Yet still in vain; for music gather'd thought;
But how unequal the effects it brought? 85
The soft ideas of the cheerful note,
Lightly receiv'd, were easily forgot;
The solemn violence of the graver sound
Knew to strike deep, and leave a lasting wound.

And now reflecting, I with grief descry 90
The sickly lust of the fantastic eye;
How the weak organ is with seeing cloy'd,
Flying ere night what it at noon enjoy'd.
And now (unhappy search of thought!) I found
The fickle ear soon glutted with the sound, 95
Condemn'd eternal changes to pursue,
Tir'd with the last and eager of the new.

I bade the virgins and the youth advance,
To temper music with the sprightly dance.
In vain! too low the mimic motions seem; 100
What takes our heart must merit our esteem.

Nature, I thought, perform'd too mean a part,
Forming her movements to the rules of art;
And vex'd I found that the musician's hand
Had o'er the dancer's mind too great command. 105

I drank; I lik'd it not: 'twas rage, 'twas noise;
An airy scene of transitory joys,
In vain I trusted that the flowing bowl
Would banish sorrow and enlarge the soul.
To the late revel and protracted feast 110

Wild dreams succeeded and disorder'd rest;
And as at dawn of morn fair reason's light
Broke thro' the fumes and phantoms of the night,
What had been said, I ask'd my soul, what done? 114
How flow'd our mirth, and whence the source begun?
Perhaps the jest that charm'd the sprightly crowd,
And made the jovial table laugh so loud,
To some false notion ow'd its poor pretence,
To an ambiguous word's perverted sense,
To a wild sonnet, or a wanton air, 120
Offence and torture to the sober ear,
Perhaps, alas! the pleasing stream was brought
From this man's error, from another's fault;
From topics which good-nature would forget,
And prudence mention with the last regret. 125

Add yet unnumber'd ills that lie unseen
In the pernicious draught; the word obscene
Or harsh, which once elanc'd must ever fly
Irrevocable: the too prompt reply,
Seed of severe distrust and fierce debate, 130
What we should shun, and what we ought to hate.

Add, too, the blood improv'ish'd, and the course
Of health suppress'd by wine's continu'd force.

Unhappy man! whom sorrow thus and rage
To diff'rent ills alternately engage; 135
Who drinks, alas! but to forget; nor sees
That melancholy sloth, severe disease,
Mem'ry confus'd, and interrupted thought,
Death's harbingers, lie latent in the draught;
And in the flow'rs that wreath the sparkling bowl
Fell adders hiss, and pois'nous serpents roll. 141

Remains there ought untry'd that may remove
 Sickness of mind, and heal the bosom ?—Love !
 Love yet remains ; indulge his genial fire,
 Cherish fair Hope, solicit young Desire, 145
 And boldly bid thy anxious soul explore
 'This last great remedy's mysterious pow'r.

Why, therefore, hesitates my doubtful breast ?
 Why ceases it one moment to be blest ?

Fly swift, my Friends ; my Servants fly ; employ
 Your instant pains to bring your master joy. 151

Let all my wives and concubines be drest ;

Let them to-night attend the royal feast ;

All Israel's beauty, all the foreign fair,

The gifts of princes, or the spoils of war : 155

Before their monarch they shall singly pass,

And the most worthy shall obtain the grace.

I said : the feast was serv'd ; the bowl was crown'd ;
 To the King's pleasure went the mirthful round.

The women came : as custom wills they past : 160

On one (O that distinguish'd one !) I cast

The fav'rite glance ! O ! yet my mind retains

That fond beginning of my infant pains.

Mature the virgin was, of Egypt's race, 164

Grace shap'd her limbs and beauty deck'd her face :

Easy her motion seem'd, serene her air ;

Full, tho' unzon'd, her bosom rose ; her hair

Unty'd, and, ignorant of artful aid,

Adown her shoulders loosely lay display'd, 169

And in the jetty curls ten thousand cupids play'd,

Fix'd on her charms, and pleas'd that I could love,

Aid me, my Friends, contribute to improve

Your monarch's blifs, I said : fresh roses bring

To strew my bed, till the improv'ish'd Spring

Confess her want : around my am'rous head 175

Be dropping myrrh and liquid amber shed

Till Arab has no more ; from the soft lyre,

Sweet flute, and ten-string'd instrument require

Sounds of delight : and thou, fair Nymph, draw nigh,

Thou in whose graceful form and potent eye, 180

Thy master's joy, long fought, at length is found,
And, as thy brow, let my desires be crown'd.

O fav'rite virgin, that hast warm'd the breast,
Whose sov'reign dictates subjugate the East!

I said : and sudden from the golden throne, 185
With a submissive step, I halted down.

The glowing garland from my hair I took,

Love in my heart, obedience in my look,

Prepar'd to place it on her comely head,

O fav'rite Virgin ! (yet again I said) 190

Receive the honours destin'd to thy brow ;

And O, above thy fellows, happy thou !

Their duty must thy sov'reign word obey.

Rise up, my love, my fair one, come away.

What pang, alas ! what ecstasy of smart 195

Tore up my senses and transfix'd my heart,

When she with modest scorn the wreath return'd,

Reclin'd her beauteous neck, and inward mourn'd !

Forc'd by my pride, I my concern suppress,

Pretended drowfiness and wish of rest ; 200

And sullen, I forlook th' imperfect feast :

Ord'ring the eunuchs, to whose proper care

Our Eastern grandeur gives th' imprison'd fair,

To lead her forth to a distinguish'd bow'r,

And bid her dress the bed, and wait the hour. 205

Restless I follow'd this obdurate maid,

(Swift are the steps that Love and Anger tread)

Approach'd her person, courted her embrace,

Renew'd my flame, repeated my disgrace :

By turns put on the suppliant and the lord : 210

Threaten'd this moment, and the next implor'd,

Offer'd again the unaccepted wreath,

And choice of happy love, or instant death.

Averse to all her am'rous King desir'd,

Far as she might she decently retir'd, 215

And darting scorn and sorrow from her eyes,

What means, said she, King Solomon the wise ?

This wretched body trembles at your pow'r ;

Thus far could Fortune, but she can no more.

Free to herself my potent mind remains, 220
Nor fears the victor's rage, nor feels his chains.

'Tis said that thou canst plausibly dispute,
Supreme of seers, of angel, man, and brute ;
Canst plead, with subtle wit and fair discourse,
Of passion's folly and of reason's force ; 225

That to the tribes attentive, thou canst know
Whence their misfortunes or their blessings flow :
That thou in science as in pow'r art great,
And truth and honour on thy edicts wait.

Where is that knowledge now, that regal thought,
With just advice and timely counsel fraught ? 231

Where now, O Judge of Israel, does it rove ?—

What in one moment dost thou offer ?—Love !

Love ? why, 'tis joy or sorrow, peace or strife ;
'Tis all the colour of remaining life, 235

And human mis'ry must begin or end

As he becomes a tyrant or a friend.

Would David's son, religious, just, and grave,

To the first bride-bed of the world receive

A foreigner, a Heathen, and a slave ? 240

Or, grant thy passion has these names destroy'd,

That Love, like Death, makes all distinction void,

Yet in his empire o'er thy abject breast

His flames and torments only are express,

His rage can in my smiles alone relent, 245

And all his joys solicit my consent.

Soft love, spontaneous tree, its parted root

Must from two hearts with equal vigour shoot,

Whilst each delighted, and delighting, gives

The pleasing ecstasy which each receives : 250

Cherish'd with hope, and fed with joy, it grows,

Its cheerful buds their op'ning bloom disclose,

And round the happy soil diffusive odour flows.

If angry fate that mutual care denies,

The fading plant bewails its due supplies ; 255

Wild with despair, or sick with grief, it dies.

By force beasts act, and are by force restrain'd ;

The human mind by gentle means is gain'd.

Thy useless strength mistaken King employ :
Seated with rage, and ignorant of joy, 260
Thou shalt not gain what I deny to yield,
Nor reap the harvest, tho' thou spoil'st the field.
Know, Solomon, thy poor extent of sway ;
Contract thy brow, and Isr'el shall obey ;
But wilful Love thou must with smiles appease,
Approach his awful throne by just degrees, 266
And if thou wouldst be happy, learn to please.

Not that those arts can here successful prove,
For I am destin'd to another's love.
Beyond the cruel bounds of thy command, 270
To my dear equal, in my native land,
My plighted vow I gave ; I his receiv'd :
Each swore with truth, with pleasure each believ'd :
The mutual contract was to heav'n convey'd ;
In equal scales the busy angels weigh'd 275
Its solemn force, and clapp'd their wings, and spread
The lasting roll, recording what we said.

Now in my heart behold thy poniard stain'd ;
Take the sad life which I have long disdain'd ;
End, in a dying virgin's wretched fate, 280
Thy ill-star'd passion and my steadfast hate :
For long as blood informs these circling veins,
Or fleeting breath its latest pow'r retains,
Hear me to Egypt's vengeful gods declare
Hate is my part ; be thine O King despair. 285

Now strike, she said, and open'd bare her breast,
Stand it in Judah's Chronicles confess
That David's son, by impious passion mov'd,
Smote a she-slave, and murder'd what he lov'd.

Asham'd, confus'd, I started from the bed, 290
And to my soul, yet uncollected, said,
Into thyself fond Solomon return ;
Reflect again, and thou again shalt mourn.
When I thro' number'd years have pleasure sought,
And in vain hope the wanton phantom caught, 295
To mock my sense and mortify my pride,
'Tis in another's pow'r and is deny'd.

Am I a king, great Heav'n? does life or death
 Hang on the wrath or mercy of my breath,
 While kneeling I my servant's smiles implore, 300
 And one mad damsel dares dispute my pow'r?

To ravish her? that thought was soon depress'd,
 Which must debase the monarch to the beast.
 To send her back? O whither, and to whom?
 To lands where Solomon must never come? 305
 To that insulting rival's happy arms
 For whom, disdaining me, she keeps her charms?

Fantastic tyrant of the am'rous heart,
 How hard thy yoke! how cruel is thy dart?
 Those 'scape thy anger who refuse thy sway, 310
 And those are punish'd most who most obey,
 See Judah's king revere thy greater pow'r;
 What canst thou covet, or how triumph more;
 Why, then, O Love, with an obdurate ear,
 Does this proud nymph reject a monarch's pray'r?
 Why to some simple shepherd does she run 315
 From the fond arms of David's fav'rite son?
 Why flies she from the glories of a court,
 Where wealth and pleasure may thy reign support,
 To some poor cottage on the mountain's brow, 320
 Now bleak with winds, and cover'd now with snow,
 Where pinching want must curb her warm desires,
 And household cares suppress thy genial fires?

Too aptly the afflicted Heathens prove
 The force, while they erect the shrines of Love. 325
 His mystic form the artizans of Greece
 In wounded stone or molten gold express;
 And Cyprus to his godhead pays her vow,
 Fast in his hand the idol holds his bow;
 A quiver by his side sustains his store 330
 Of pointed darts, sad emblems of his pow'r;
 A pair of wings he has, which he extends
 Now to be gone, which now again he bends,
 Prone to return, as best may serve his wanton ends.
 Entirely thus I find the fiend pourtray'd, 335
 Since first, alas! I saw the beauteous maid;

I felt him strike, and now I see him fly :
Curs'd dæmon ! O ! for ever broken lie
Those fatal shafts by which I inward bleed !
O ! can my wishes yet o'ertake thy speed ! 340
Tir'd may'st thou pant, and hang thy flagging wing,
Except thou turn'st thy course, resolv'd to bring
The damsel back, and save the love-sick king.

My soul thus struggling in the fatal net,
Unable to enjoy or to forget, 345
I reason'd much, alas ! but more I lov'd,
Sent and recall'd, ordain'd and disapprov'd,
Till hopeless plung'd in an abyss of grief,
I from necessity receiv'd relief ;
Time gently aided to assuage my pain, 350
And wisdom took once more the slacken'd rein.

But O how short my interval of woe ?
Our griefs how swift, our remedies how slow !
Another nymph, (for so did Heav'n ordain,
Yo change the manner but renew the pain) 355
Another nymph, amongst the many fair
That made my softer hours their solemn care,
Before the rest affected still to stand,
And watch'd my eye, preventing my command.
Abra, she so was call'd, did soonest haste 360
To grace my presence ; Abra went the last ;
Abra was ready ere I call'd her name,
And tho' I call'd another, Abra came.

Her equals first observ'd her growing zeal,
And laughing gloss'd, that Abra serv'd so well. 365
To me her actions did unheeded die,
Or were remark'd but with a common eye,
Till more appriz'd of what the rumour said,
More I observ'd peculiar in the maid.

The sun declin'd had shot his western ray, 370
When, tir'd with bus'ness of the solemn day,
I purpos'd to unbend the ev'ning hours,
And banquet private in the women's bow'rs.
I call'd before I sat to wash my hands,
For so the precept of the law commands ; 375

Love had ordain'd that it was Abra's turn
To mix the sweets, and minister the urn.

With awful homage and submissive dread
The maid approach'd, on my declining head
To pour the oils: she trembled as she pour'd: 380
With an unguarded look she now devour'd
My nearer face; and now recall'd her eye,
And heav'd, and strove to hide a sudden sigh.
And whence, said I, canst thou have dread or pain?
What can thy imag'ry of sorrow mean? 385

Secluded from the world and all its care,
Hast thou to grieve or joy, to hope or fear?
For sure, I added, sure thy little heart
Ne'er felt Love's anger or receiv'd his dart.

Abash'd she blush'd, and with disorder spoke; 390
Her rising shame adorn'd the words it broke.

If the great master will descend to hear
The humble series of his handmaid's care,
O! while she tells it, let him not put on
The look that awes the nations from the throne; 395
O! let not death severe in glory lie
In the King's frown and terror of his eye.

Mine to obey, thy part is to ordain;
And tho' to mention be to suffer pain,
If the king smiles whilst I my woe recite, 400
If weeping I find favour in his sight,
Flow fast my tears, full rising his delight.

O! witness earth beneath and heav'n above,
For can I hide it? I am sick of love!
If madness may the name of passion bear, 405
Or love be call'd what is indeed despair.

Thou sov'reign Pow'r, whose secret will controls
The inward bent and motion of our souls!
Why hast thou plac'd such infinite degrees
Between the cause and cure of my disease? 410
The mighty object of that raging fire
In which unpity'd Abra must expire,
Had he been born some simple shepherd's heir,
The lowing herd or fleecy sheep his care,



Measure Book II Line 378.

PRIORS POEMS.
Embellish'd under the direction of C. Cooke. Folio 1803.

SOLOMON.
With awful homage and submissive dread,
The Maid approach'd on my declining head,
To pour the oils —
Designed by J. Thurston.
Engraved by J. Scott.

At morn with him I o'er the hills had run,
Scornful of winter's frost and summer's fun,
Still asking where he made his flock to rest at noon.

415

For him at night, the dear expected guest,
I had with hasty joy prepar'd the feast,
And from the cottage, o'er the distant plain,
Sent forth my longing eye to meet the swain,
Wav'ring, impatient, tofs'd by hope and feat,
Till he and joy together should appear,
And the lov'd dog declare his master near.

420

On my declining neck and open breast
I should have lull'd the lovely youth to rest,
And from beneath his head at dawning day,
With softest care, have stol'n my arm away,
To rise, and from the fold release the sheep,
Fond of his flock, indulgent to his sleep.

425

430

Or if kind Heav'n, propitious to my flame,
(For sure from Heav'n the faithful ardour came)
Had blest my life, and deck'd my natal hour
With height of title and extent of pow'r,
Without a crime my passion had aspir'd,
Found the lov'd prince, and told what I desir'd.

435

Then I had come, preventing Sheba's queen,
To see the comeliest of the sons of men:

To hear the charming poet's am'rous song,
And gather honey falling from his tongue;

440

To take the fragrant kisses of his mouth,
Sweeter than breezes of her native south,
Likening his grace, his person, and his mein,
To all that great or beauteous I had seen.

Serene and bright his eyes, as solar beams,
Reflecting temper'd light from crystal streams;

445

Ruddy as gold his cheek; his bosom fair

As silver; the curled ringlets of his hair

Black as the raven's wing; his lips more red
Than eastern coral or the scarlet thread;

450

Even his teeth, and white like a young flock,

Coeval, newly shorn, from the clear brook

Recent, and blanching on the sunny rock.

Iv'ry with sapphires interspers'd, explains
 How white his hands, how blue the manly veins ; 455
 Columns of polish'd marble, firmly set
 On golden bases, are his legs and feet :
 His stature all majestic, all divine,
 Strait as the palm tree, strong as is the pine ;
 Saffron and myrrh are on his garments shed, 460
 And everlasting sweets bloom round his head.
 What utter I ! where am I ! wretched maid !
 Die, Abra, die ; too plainly hast thou said
 Thy soul's desire to meet his high embrace,
 And blessing stamp'd upon thy future race ; 565
 To bid attentive nations bless thy womb,
 With unborn monarchs charg'd, and Solomons to come.

Here o'er her speech her flowing eyes prevail.
 O foolish maid ! and O unhappy tale !
 My suff'ring heart for ever shall defy 470
 New wounds and danger from a future eye.
 O ! yet my tortur'd senses deep retain
 The wretched mem'ry of my former pain,
 The dire affront, and my Egyptian chain.

As time, I said, may happily efface 475
 That cruel image of the King's disgrace,
 Imperial Reason shall resume her seat,
 And Solomon, once fall'n, again be great.
 Betray'd by passion, as subdu'd in war,
 We wisely should exert a double care, 480
 Nor ever ought a second time to err.

This Abra then——
 I saw her ; 'twas humanity ; it gave
 Some respite to the sorrows of my slave.
 Her fond excess proclaim'd her passion true, 485
 And gen'rous pity to that truth was due.
 Well I entreated her who well deserv'd ;
 I call'd her often, for she always serv'd :
 Use made her person easy to my sight,
 And ease insensibly produc'd delight. 490

Whene'er I revell'd in the women's bow'rs
 (For first I sought her but at looser hours)

The apples she had gather'd smelt most sweet,
The cake she kneaded was the sav'ry meat;
But fruits their odour lost, and meats their taste, 495
If gentle Abra had not deck'd the feast:
Dishonour'd did the sparkling goblet stand,
Unless receiv'd from gentle Abra's hand;
And when the virgins form'd the ev'ning choir,
Raising their voices to the master-lyre, 500
Too flat I thought this voice, and that too shrill;
One show'd too much, and one too little skill;
Nor could my soul approve the music's tone,
Till all was hush'd, and Abra sung alone.
Fairer she seem'd distinguish'd from the rest, 505
And better mien disclos'd, as better drest:
A bright tiara round her forehead ty'd,
To juster bounds confin'd its rising pride:
The blushing ruby on her snowy breast
Render'd its panting whiteness more confest; 510
Bracelets of pearl gave roundness to her arm,
And ev'ry gem augmented ev'ry charm:
Her senses pleas'd, her beauty still improv'd,
And she more lovely grew as more belov'd.

And now I could behold, avow, and blame, 515
The several follies of my former flame,
Willing my heart for recompence to prove
The certain joys that lie in prosp'rous love.
For what, said I, from Abra can I fear,
Too humble to insult, too soft to be severe? 520
The damsel's sole ambition is to please;
With freedom I may like, and quit with ease;
She soothes, but never can enthrall my mind:
Why may not peace and love for once be join'd?

Great Heav'n! how frail thy creature man is made!
How by himself insensibly betray'd! 526
In our own strength unhappily secure,
Too little cautious of the adverse pow'r,
And by the blast of self-opinion mov'd,
We wish to charm, and seek to be belov'd. 530
On pleasures flowing brink we idly stray,
Masters as yet of our returning way;

Seeing no danger we disarm our mind,
 And give our conduct to the waves and wind ;
 Then in the flow'ry mead or verdant shade 535
 To wanton dalliance negligently laid,
 We weave the chaplet and we crown the bowl,
 And smiling see the nearer waters roll,
 Till the strong gusts of raging passion rise,
 Till the dire tempest mingles earth and skies, 540
 And swift into the boundless ocean borne,
 Our foolish confidence too late we mourn ;
 Round our devoted heads the billows beat,
 And from our troubled view the lessen'd lands retreat.

O mighty Love ! from thy unbounded pow'r 545
 How shall the human bosom rest secure ?
 How shall our thought avoid the various snare,
 Or wisdom to our caution'd soul declare
 The different shapes thou pleasest to employ
 When bent to hurt, and certain to destroy ? 550

The haughty nymph, in open beauty drest,
 To-day encounters our unguarded breast ;
 She looks with majesty, and moves with state :
 Unbent her soul, and in misfortune great,
 She scorns the world, and dares the rage of Fate. 555

Here whilst we take stern manhood for our guide,
 And guard our conduct with becoming pride,
 Charm'd with the courage in her action shown,
 We praise her mind, the image of our own,
 She that can please is certain to persuade ; 560
 To-day belov'd, to-morrow is obey'd.

We think we see thro' Reason's optics right,
 Nor find how Beauty's rays elude our sight :
 Struck with her eye whilst we applaud her mind,
 And when we speak her great we wish her kind. 565

To-morrow, cruel Pow'r ! thou arm'st the fair
 With flowing sorrow and dishevell'd hair.
 Sad her complaint, and humble is her tale,
 Her sighs explaining where her accent fail :
 Here gen'rous softness warms the honest breast ; 570
 We raise the sad, and succour the distressed,

And whilst our wish prepares the kind relief,
 Whilst pity mitigates her rising grief,
 We sicken soon from her contagious care,
 Grieve for her sorrows, groan for her despair, 575
 And against love, too late, those bosoms arm,
 Which tears can soften, and which sighs can warm.

Against this nearest, cruellest of foes,
 What shall wit meditate, or force oppose?
 Whence, feeble Nature, shall we summon aid, 580
 If by our pity and our pride betray'd?
 External remedy shall we hope to find,
 When the close fiend has gain'd our treach'rous mind,
 Insulting there does Reason's pow'r deride,
 And, blind himself, conducts the dazzled guide? 585

My conqu'ror now, my lovely Abra, held
 My freedom in her chains; my heart was fill'd
 With her, with her alone, in her alone
 It sought its peace and joy: while she was gone
 It sigh'd, and griev'd, impatient of her stay: 590
 Return'd, she chas'd those sighs, that grief, away:
 Her absence made the night, her presence brought the
 day.

The ball, the play, the mask, by turns succeed:
 For her I make the song; the dance with her I lead:
 I court her, various, in each shape and dress 595
 That luxury may form or thought express.

To-day beneath the palm-tree, on the plains,
 In Deborah's arms and habit Abra reigns:
 The wreath, denoting conquest, guides her brow,
 And low, like Barak, at her feet I bow. 600
 The mimic Chorus sings her prosp'rous hand,
 As she had slain the foe and sav'd the land.

To-morrow she approves a softer air,
 Forsakes the pomp and pageantry of war,
 The form of peaceful Abigail assumes, 605
 And from the village with the present comes:
 The youthful band depose their glitt'ring arms,
 Receive her bounties and recite her charms,
 Whilst I assume my father's step and mien,
 To meet with due regard my future queen. 610

If hap'ly Abra's will be now inclin'd
To range the woods or chase the flying hind,
Soon as the sun awakes, the sprightly court
Leave their repose, and hasten to the sport.
In lessen'd royalty, and humble state, 615
Thy king, Jerusalem! descends to wait
Till Abra comes. She comes; a milk-white steed,
Mixture of Persia's and Arabia's breed,
Sustain's the nymph: her garments flying loose,
(As the Sydonian maids or Thracian use) 620
And half her knee and half her breast appear
By art, like negligence, disclos'd and bare.
Her left hand guides the hunting courser's flight,
A silver bow she carries in her right,
And from the golden quiver at her side 625
Rustles the ebon arrow's feather'd pride;
Sapphires and diamonds on her front display
An artificial moon's increasing ray.
Diana, huntress, mistress of the groves,
The fav'rite Abra speaks, and looks, and moves. 630
Her, as the present goddess, I obey,
Beneath her feet the captive game I lay;
The mingled Chorus sing Diana's fame,
Clarions and horns in louder peals proclaim
Her mystic praise, the vocal triumphs bound 635
Against the hills; the hills reflect the sound.
If tir'd this ev'ning with the hunted woods,
To the large fish-pools or the glassy floods
Her mind to-morrow points a thousand hands
To-night employ'd obey the king's commands; 640
Upon the wat'ry beach an artful pile
Of planks is join'd, and forms a moving isle;
A golden chariot in the midst is set,
And silver cygnets seem to feel its weight.
Abra, bright queen, ascends her gaudy throne, 645
In semblance of the Grecian Venus known;
Tritons and sea-green naiads round her move,
And sing in moving strains the force of love;
Whilst, as th' approaching pageant does appear,
And echoing crowds speak mighty Venus near, 650

I her adorer, too devoutly stand
Fast on the utmost margin of the land,
With arms and hopes extended, to receive
The fancy'd goddess rising from the wave.

O subject Reason! O imperious Love! 655

Whither yet further would my folly rove?
Is it enough that Abra should be great
In the wall'd palace or the rural feat;
That masking habits and a borrow'd name
Contrive to hide my plenitude of shame? 660

No, no: Jerusalem combin'd must see
My open fault and regal infamy.

Solemn a month is destin'd for the feast;

Abra invites; the nation is the guest.

To have the honour of each day sustain'd 665

The woods are travers'd, and the lakes are drain'd:

Arabia's wilds and Egypt's are explor'd;

The edible creation decks the board:

Hardly the phenix 'scapes—————

The men their lyres, the maids their voices raise, 670

To sing my happiness and Abra's praise,

And slavish bards our mutual loves rehearse

In lying strains and ignominious verse;

While from the banquet leading forth the bride,

Whom prudent love from public eyes should hide,

I show her to the world, confess'd and known 676

Queen of my heart, and partner of my throne.

And now her friends and flatt'ers fill the court;

From Dan and from Beersheba they resort;

They barter places and dispose of grants, 680

Whole provinces unequal to their wants;

They teach her to recede or to debate;

With toys of love to mix affairs of state;

By practis'd rules her empire to secure,

And in my pleasure make my ruin sure. 685

They gave and she transferr'd the curs'd advice,

That monarchs should their inward soul disguise,

Dissemble and command, be false and wise;

By ignominious arts, for servile ends, 689

Should compliment their foes and shun their friends.

And now I leave the true and just supports
 Of legal princes and of honest courts,
 Barzillai's and the fierce Benaiah's heirs,
 Whose fires, great partners in my father's cares,
 Saluted their young king, at Hebron crown'd, 695
 Great by their toil, and glorious by their wound :

And now unhappy counsel, I prefer
 Those whom my follies only made me fear,
 Old Corah's brood and taunting Shimei's race,
 Miscreants who ow'd their lives to David's grace, 700
 Tho' they had spurn'd his rule and curs'd him to his face.

Still Abra's pow'r, my scandal, still increas'd ;
 Justice submitted to what Abra pleas'd :
 Her will alone could settle or revoke,
 And law was fixt by what she latest spoke. 705

Israel neglected, Abra was my care ;
 I only acted, thought, and liv'd for her.
 I durst not reason with my wounded heart ;
 Abra possess'd ; she was its better part.

O ! had I now review'd the famous cause 710
 Which gave my righteous youth so just applause,
 In vain on the dissembled mother's tongue
 Had cunning art and sly persuasion hung,
 And real care in vain, and native love,
 In the true parent's panting breast had strove, 715
 While both deceiv'd had seen the destin'd child
 Or slain, or sav'd, as Abra frown'd or smil'd.

Unknowing to command, proud to obey,
 A lifeless king, a royal shade I lay.
 Unheard the injur'd orphans now complain ; 720
 The widow's cries address the throne in vain.
 Causes unjudg'd disgrace the loaded file,
 And sleeping laws the king's neglect revile.
 No more the Elders throng'd around my throne
 To hear my maxims, and reform their own ; 725
 No more the young nobility were taught
 How Moses govern'd and how David fought.
 Loose and undisciplin'd the soldier lay,
 Or lost in drink and game the solid day ;

Porches and schools, design'd for public good,
Uncover'd, and with scaffolds cumber'd stood,
Or nodded, threat'ning ruin—

730

Half pillars wanted their expected height,
And roofs imperfect prejudic'd the sight.

The artists grieve; the lab'ring people droop;
My father's legacy, my country's hope,
God's temples, lie unfinish'd—

735

The wise and grave deplor'd their monarch's fate,
And future mischiefs of a sinking state.

Is this, the serious said, is this the man,
Whose active soul thro' ev'ry science ran?

740

Who by just rule and elevated skill
Prescrib'd the dubious bounds of good and ill?

Whose golden sayings and immortal wit

On large phylacteries expressive writ,

745

Were to the forehead of the Rabbins ty'd,

Our youth's instruction and our age's pride?

Could not the wise his wild desires restrain?

Then was our hearing and his preaching vain!

What from his life and letters were we taught

750

But that his knowledge aggravates his fault?

In lighter mood, the hum'rous and the gay
(As crown'd with roses at their feasts they lay)
Sent the full goblet charg'd with Abra's name,
And charms superior to their master's fame.

755

Laughing, some praise the king, who let 'em see
How aptly luxe and empire might agree:

Some gloss'd how love and wisdom were at strife,
And brought my proverbs to confront my life.

However, friend, here's to the king, one cries:

760

To him who was the king, the friend replies.

The king, for Judah's and for wisdom's curse

To Abra yields: could I or thou do worse?

Our looser lives let Chance or Folly steer,

If thus the prudent and determin'd err.

765

Let Dinah bind with flow'rs her flowing hair,

And touch the lute and sound the wanton air,

Let us the bliss without the sting receive,

Free as we will or to enjoy or leave.

Pleasures on levity's smooth surface flow ; 770
 Thought brings the weight that sinks the soul to woe,
 Now be this maxim to the king convey'd,
 And added to the thousand he has made.

Sadly, O Reason, is thy pow'r exprest,
 Thou gloomy tyrant of the frightened breast ! 775
 And harsh the rules which we from thee receive,
 If for our wisdom we our pleasure give,
 And more to think be only more to grieve :
 If Judah's king, at thy tribunal try'd,
 Forfakes his joy to vindicate his pride, 780
 And, changing sorrows, I am only found [bound.
 Loos'd from the chains of love, in thine more strictly

But do I call thee tyrant, or complain
 How hard thy laws, how absolute thy reign ?
 While thou, alas ! art but an empty name, 785
 To no two men who e'er discours'd the same ;
 The idle product of a troubled thought,
 In borrow'd shapes and airy colours wrought ;
 A fancy'd line, and a reflected shade ;
 A chain which man to fetter man has made, 790
 By artifice impos'd, by fear obey'd.

Yet, wretched name, or arbitrary thing,
 Whence-ever I thy cruel essence bring,
 I own thy influence, for I feel thy sting.
 Reluctant I perceive thee in my soul, 795
 Form'd to command, and destin'd to control.
 Yes, thy insulting dictates shall be heard ;
 Virtue for once shall be her own reward :
 Yes, rebel Israel, this unhappy maid
 Shall be dismiss'd ; the crowd shall be obey'd : 800
 The king his passion and his rule shall leave,
 No longer Abra's but the people's slave :
 My coward soul shall bear its wayward fate ;
 I will, alas ! be wretched to be great,
 And sigh in royalty, and grieve in state. 805

I said, resolv'd to plunge into my grief
 At once, so far as to expect relief
 From my despair alone—

I chose to write the thing I durst not speak
To her I lov'd, to her I must forsake.

810

The harsh epistle, labour'd much to prove
How inconsistent majesty and love.

I always should, it said, esteem her well,
But never see her more: it bid her feel

No future pain for me; but instant wed

815

A lover more proportion'd to her bed,

And quiet dedicate her remnant life

To the just duties of an humble wife.

She read, and forth to me she wildly ran,
To me, the ease of all her former pain.

820

She kneel'd, entreated, struggled, threaten'd, cry'd,

And with alternate passion liv'd and dy'd;

Till now deny'd the liberty to mourn,

And by rude fury from my presence torn,

This only object of my real care

825

Cut off from hope, abandon'd to despair,

In some few posting fatal hours is hurl'd [world.

From wealth, from pow'r, from love, and from the

Here tell me, if thou dar'st, my conscious soul,

What diff'rent sorrows did within thee roll?

830

What pangs, what fires, what racks, didst thou sustain?

What sad vicissitudes of smarting pain?

How oft' from pomp and state did I remove,

To feed despair, and cherish hopeless love?

How oft all day recall'd I Abra's charms,

835

Her beauties press'd, and panting in my arms?

How oft with sighs view'd ev'ry female face

Where mimic Fancy might her likeness trace?

How oft desir'd to fly from Israel's throne,

And live in shades with her and love alone?

840

How oft all night pursu'd her in my dreams,

O'er flow'ry vallies and thro' crystal streams,

And waking, view'd with grief the rising sun,

And fondly mourn'd the dear delusion gone?

When thus the gather'd storms of wretched love 845

In my swell'd bosom with long war had strove,

At length they broke their bounds; at length their force

Bore down whatever met its stronger course;

Laid all the civil bonds of manhood waste,
 And scatter'd ruin as the torrent past. 850
 So from the hills, whose hollow caves contain
 The congregated snow and swelling rain,
 Till the full stores their ancient bounds disdain,
 Precipitate the furious torrent flows :
 In vain would speed avoid or strength oppose : 855
 Towns, forests, herds, and men, promiscuous drown'd,
 With one great death deform the dreary ground ;
 The echo'd woes from distant rocks resound.
 And now what impious ways my wishes took,
 How they the monarch and the man forsook, 860
 And how I follow'd an abandon'd will
 Thro' crooked paths and sad retreats of ill ;
 How Judah's daughters now, now foreign slaves,
 By turns my prostituted bed receives,
 Thro' tribes of women how I loosely rang'd 865
 Impatient, lik'd to-night, to-morrow chang'd,
 And by the instinct of capricious lust
 Enjoy'd, disdain'd, was grateful or unjust ;
 O, be these scenes from human eyes conceal'd,
 In clouds of decent silence justly veil'd ! 870
 O, be the wanton images convey'd
 To black oblivion and eternal shade !
 Or let their sad epit. me alone
 And outward lines to future age be known,
 Enough to propagate the sure belief 875
 That vice engenders shame, and folly broods o'er grief.
 Bury'd in sloth and lost in ease I lay ;
 The night I revell'd, and I slept the day.
 New heaps of fuel damp'd my kindling fires,
 And daily change extinguish'd young desires. 880
 By its own force destroy'd, fruition ceas'd ;
 And always weary'd, I was never pleas'd.
 No longer now does my neglected mind
 Its wonted stores and old ideas find.
 Fix'd judgment there no longer does abide 885
 To take the true or set the false aside,
 No longer does swift Mem'ry trace the cells
 Where springing Wit or young Invention dwells,

Frequent debauch to habitude prevails ;

Patience of toil and love of virtue fails.

890

By sad degrees impair'd my vigour dies,

Till I command no longer e'en in vice.

The women on my dotage build their sway :

They ask ; I grant : they threaten ; I obey.

In regal garments now I gravely stride,

895

Aw'd by the Persian damsels' haughty pride ;

Now with the looser Syrian dance and sing,

In robes tuck'd up, opprobrious to the king.

Charm'd by their eyes, their manners I acquire,

And shape my foolishness to their desire ;

900

Seduc'd and aw'd by the Philistine dame,

At Dagon's shrine I kindle impious flame.

With the Chaldeans charms her rites prevail,

And curling frankincense ascends to Baal.

To each new harlot I new altars dress,

905

And serve her god whose person I caress.

Where, my deluded sense, was reason flown ?

Where the high majesty of David's throne ?

Where all the maxims of eternal truth,

With which the living God inform'd my youth,

910

When with the lewd Egyptian I adore

Vain idols, deities that ne'er before

In Israel's land had fix'd their dire abodes,

Beastly divinities, and droves of gods ;

Osiris, Apis, pow'rs that chew the cud,

915

And dog Anubis, flatt'rer for his food ?

When in the woody hills forbidden shade

I carv'd the marble and invok'd its aid :

When in the fens to snakes and flies, with zeal

Unworthy human thought, I prostrate fell ;

920

To shrubs and plants my vile devotion paid,

And set the bearded leek to which I pray'd ;

When to all beings sacred rites were giv'n,

Forgot the Arbiter of earth and heav'n ?

Thro' these sad shades, this chaos in my soul,

925

Some seeds of light at length began to roll :

The rising motion of an infant ray

Shot glimm'ring thro' the cloud, and promis'd day.

And now one moment able to reflect,
 I found the king abandon'd to neglect, 930
 Seen without awe, and serv'd without respect.
 I found my subjects amicably join
 To lessen their defects by citing mine.

The priest with pity prays for David's race,
 And left his text to dwell on my disgrace. 935
 The father, whilst he warn'd his erring son,
 The sad examples which he ought to shun
 Describ'd, and only nam'd not, Solomon,
 Each bard, each sire, did to his pupil sing,
 A wise child better than a foolish king. 940

Into myself my reason's eye I turn'd,
 And as I much reflected much I mourn'd.
 A mighty king I am, an earthly god ;
 Nations obey my word and wait my nod :
 I raise or sink, imprison or set free, 945
 And life or death depends on my decree.
 Fond the idea, and the thought is vain ;
 O'er Judah's king ten thousand tyrants reign,
 Legions of lust and various pow'rs of ill
 Insult the master's tributary will ; 950
 And he from whom the nations should receive
 Justice and freedom, lies himself a slave,
 Tortur'd by cruel change of wild desires,
 Lash'd by mad rage, and scorch'd by brutal fires.

O Reason ! once again to thee I call ; 955
 Accept my sorrow and retrieve my fall.
 Wisdom, thou say'st, from heav'n receiv'd her birth,
 Her beams transmitted to the subject earth :
 Yet this great empress of the human soul
 Does only with the imagin'd pow'r control, 960
 If restless passion, by rebellious sway,
 Compels the weak usurper to obey.

O troubled, weak, and coward, as thou art,
 Without thy poor advice the lab'ring heart
 To worse extremes with swifter steps would run, 965
 Not sav'd by virtue, yet by vice undone.

Oft have I said, The praise of doing well
 Is to the ear as ointment to the smell.

Now if some flies perchance, however small,
Into the alabaster urn should fall, 970
The odours of the sweets enclos'd would die,
And stench corrupt (sad change!) their place supply:
So the least faults, if mix'd with fairest deed,
Of future ill become the fatal seed;
Into the balm of purest virtue cast, 975
Annoy all life with one contagious blast.

Loft Solomon! pursue this thought no more;
Of thy past errors recollect the store;
And silent weep, that while the deathless Muse
Shall sing the just, shall o'er their head diffuse 980
Perfumes with lavish hand, she shall proclaim
Thy crimes alone, and to thy evil fame
Impartial, scatter damps and poisons on thy name.
Awaking therefore, as who long had dream'd,
Much of my women and their gods asham'd, 985
From this abyfs of exemplary vice
Resolv'd, as time might aid my thought, to rise,
Again I bid the mournful goddess write
The fond pursuit of fugitive delight;
Bid her exalt her melancholy wing, 990
And, rais'd from earth, and sav'd from passion, sing
Of human hope by cross event destroy'd,
Of useless wealth and greatness unenjoy'd;
Of lust and love, with their fantastic train, 994
Their wishes, smiles, and looks, deceitful all and vain.



POWER.

BOOK III.

Texts chiefly alluded to in this Book.

Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken
or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken
at the cistern, Eccles. chap. xii. ver. 6.

The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to
his place where he arose, chap. i. ver. 5.

The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the
north; it whirleth about continually: and the wind return-
eth again according to his circuits, ver. 6.

All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full: unto the
place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again,
ver. 7.

Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit
shall return unto God who gave it, chap. xii. ver. 7.

Now when Solomon had made an end of praying, the fire came
down from heaven and consumed the burnt-offering and the
sacrifices; and the glory of the Lord filled the house, 2 Chron.
chap. vii. ver. 1.

By the rivers of Babylon there we sat down; yea, we wept,
when we remembered Zion, &c. Psal. cxxxvii. ver. 1.

I said of laughter, It is mad: and of mirth, What doth it?
Eccles. chap. ii. ver. 2.

—No man can find out the work that God maketh from the be-
ginning to the end, chap. iii. ver. 11.

—Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever; nothing can be put
to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men
should fear before him, ver. 14.

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter; Fear God, and
keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man
chap. xii. ver. 13.

P O W E R.

BOOK III.

The Argument.

Solomon considers man through the several stages and conditions of life, and concludes, in general, that we are all miserable. He reflects more particularly upon the trouble and uncertainty of greatness and power; gives some instances thereof from Adam down to himself; and still concludes that ALL IS VANITY. He reasons again upon life, death, and a future being; finds human wisdom too imperfect to resolve his doubts; has recourse to religion; is informed by an angel what shall happen to himself, his family, and his kingdom, till the redemption of Israel: and, upon the whole, resolves to submit his enquiries and anxieties to the will of his Creator.

COME then, my soul: I call thee by that name,
 Thou busy thing, from whence I know I am;]
 For, knowing that I am, I know thou art,
 Since that must needs exist which can impart:
 But how thou cam'st to be, or whence thy spring, 5
 For various of thee priests and poets sing.

Hear'st thou submissive, but a lowly birth,
 Some secret particles of finer earth,
 A plain effect which Nature must beget,
 As motion orders, and as atoms meet, 10
 Companion of the body's good or ill,
 From force of instinct more than choice of will,
 Conscious of fear or valour, joy or pain,
 As the wild courses of the blood ordain;
 Who, as degrees of heat and cold prevail, 15
 In youth dost flourish, and with age shalt fail,
 Till, mingled with thy partner's latest breath,
 Thou fly'st, desolv'd in air and lost in death.

Or, if thy great existence would aspire
 To causes more sublime, of heavenly fire 20
 Wert thou a spark struck off, a sep'rate ray,
 Ordain'd to mingle with terrestrial clay,
 With it condemn'd for certain years to dwell,
 To grieve its frailties, and its pains to feel;
 To teach it good and ill, disgrace or fame, 25
 Pale it with rage, or redden it with shame

To guide its actions with informing care,
 In peace to judge, to conquer in the war;
 Render it agile, witty, valiant, sage,
 As fits the various course of human age, 30
 Till, as the earthly part decays and falls,
 The captive breaks her prison's mould'ring walls,
 Hovers awhile upon the sad remains,
 Which now the pile or sepulchre contains,
 And thence, with liberty unbounded, flies, 35
 Impatient to regain her native skies?

Whate'er thou art, where'er ordain'd to go,
 (Points which we rather may dispute than know)
 Come on, thou little inmate of this breast,
 Which for thy sake from passions I divest; 40
 For these, thou say'st, raise all the stormy strife,
 Which hinder thy repose, and trouble life;
 Be the fair level of thy actions laid
 As temp'rance wills and prudence may persuade:
 Be thy affections undisturbed and clear, 45
 Guided to what may great or good appear,
 And try if life be worth the liver's care.

Amass'd in man, there justly is beheld
 What through the whole creation has excell'd,
 The life and growth of plants, of beasts the sense, 50
 The angel's forecast and intelligence:
 Say, from these glorious seeds what harvest flows?
 Recount our blessings, and compare our woes:
 In its true light let clearest reason see
 The man dragg'd out to act, and forc'd to be; 55
 Helpless and naked, on a woman's knees
 To be expos'd or rear'd as she may please,
 Feel her neglect, and pine from her disease:
 His tender eye by too direct a ray
 Wounded, and flying from unpractis'd day; 60
 His heart assaulted by invading air,
 And beating fervent to the vital war;
 To his young sense how various forms appear,
 That strike his wonder, and excite his fear;
 By his distortions he reveals his pains; 65
 He by his tears and by his sighs complains,

Till time and use assist the infant wretch,
By broken words, and rudiments of speech,
His wants in plainer characters to shew,
And paint more perfect figures of his woe, 70
Condemned to sacrifice his childish years
To babbling ign'rance, and to empty fears;
To pass the riper period of his age,
Acting his part upon a crowded stage;
To lasting toils expos'd, and endless cares, 75
To open dangers, and to secret snares;
To malice which the vengeful foe intends,
And the more dang'rous love of seeming friends:
His deeds examin'd by the people's will,
Prone to forget the good, and blame the ill; 80
Or, sadly censur'd in their curs'd debate,
Who, in the scorner's or the judge's seat
Dare to condemn the virtue which they hate:
Or would he rather leave this frantic scene,
And trees and beasts prefer to courts and men, 85
In the remotest wood and lonely grot
Certain to meet that worst of evils, thought,
Diff'rent ideas to his mem'ry brought,
Some intricate, as are the pathless woods,
Impetuous some, as the descending floods; 90
With anxious doubts, with raging passions torn,
No sweet companion near, with whom to mourn,
He hears the echoing rock return his sighs,
And from himself the frightened hermit flies.

Thus, through what path foe'er of life we rove,
Rage companies our hate, and grief our love; 96
Vex'd with the present moment's heavy gloom,
Why seek we brightness from the years to come?
Disturb'd and broken, like a sick man's sleep,
Our troubled thoughts to distant prospects leap, 100
Desirous still what flies us to o'ertake;
For hope is but the dream of those that wake:
But looking back we see the dreadful train
Of woes anew, which, were we to sustain,
We should refuse to tread the path again: 105

Still adding grief, still counting from the first,
 Judging the latest evil still the worst,
 And sadly finding each progressive hour
 Heighten their number and augment their power,
 Till by one countless sum of woes oppress'd, 110
 Hoary with cares, and ignorant of rest,
 We find the vital springs relax'd and worn,
 Compell'd our common impotence to mourn :
 Thus, through the round of age, to childhood we
 return ;

Reflecting find, that naked from the womb 115
 We yesterday came forth ; that in the tomb
 Naked again we must to-morrow lie,
 Born to lament, to labour, and to die.

Pass we the ills which each man feels or dreads,
 The weight or fall'n or hanging o'er our heads ; 120
 The bear, the lion, terrors of the plain,
 The sheepfold scatter'd, and the shepherd slain ;
 The frequent errors of the pathless wood,
 The giddy precipice, and the dang'rous flood ;
 The noisome pestilence, that in open war 125
 Terrible, marches through the mid-day air,
 And scatters death ; the arrow that by night
 Cuts the dank mist, and fatal wings its flight ;
 The billowing snow, and violence of the show'r,
 That from the hills disperse their dreadful store,
 And o'er the vales collected ruin pour ; 131
 The worm that gnaws the rip'ning fruit, sad guest,
 Canker or locust, hurtful to infect
 The blade ; while husks elude the tiller's care,
 And eminence of want distinguishes the year. 135

Pass we the slow disease, and subtle pain
 Which our weak frame is destin'd to sustain ;
 The cruel stone, with congregated war,
 Tearing his bloody way ; the cold catarrh,
 With frequent impulse, and continued strife 140
 Weakning the wasted seeds of irksome like ;
 The gout's fierce rack, the burning fever's rage,
 The sad experience of decay and age,

Book III.

SOLOMON.

135

Herself the forest ill, while death and ease,
Oft and in vain invok'd, or to appease
Or end the grief, with hasty wings recede
From the vex'd patient and the sickly bed.

145

Nought shall it profit that the charming fair,
Angelic, softest work of Heav'n, draws near
To the cold shaking paralytic hand,
Senseless of Beauty's touch, or Love's command,
Nor longer apt or able to fulfil
The dictates of its feeble master's will.
Nought shall the psaltry and the harp avail,
The pleasing song, or well-repeated tale,
When the quick spirits their warm march forbear,
And numbing coldness has unbrac'd the ear.

150

155

The verdant rising of the flow'ry hill,
The vale enamell'd, and the crystal rill,
The ocean rolling, and the shelly shore,
Beautiful objects, shall delight no more,
When the lax'd sinews of the weaken'd eye
In wat'ry damps or dim suffusion lie.

160

Day follows night; the clouds return again
After the falling of the latter rain;

165

But to the aged blind shall ne'er return
Grateful vicissitude; he still must mourn
The sun, and moon, and ev'ry starry light,
Eclips'd to him, and lost in everlasting night.

Behold where Age's wretched victim lies;
See his head trembling, and his half-clos'd eyes;
Frequent for breath his panting bosom heaves;
To broken sleeps his remnant sense he gives,
And only by his pains awaking finds he lives.

170

Loos'd by devouring Time, the silver cord
Dissever'd lies; unhonour'd from the board
The crystal urn, when broken, is thrown by,
And apter utensils their place supply.

175

These things and thou must share one equal lot;
Die and be lost, corrupt and be forgot;
While still another and another race
Shall now supply and now give up the place.

180

From earth all came, to earth must all return,
Frail as the cord, and brittle as the urn.

But be the terror of all these ills suppress'd, 185
And view we man with health and vigour blest.

Home he returns with the declining sun,
His destin'd task of labour hardly done;
Goes forth again with the ascending ray,
Again his travail for his bread to pay, 190
And find the ill sufficient to the day.

Haply at night he does with horror shun
A widow'd daughter, or a dying son;
His neighbour's offspring he to-morrow sees,
And doubly feels his want in their increase: 195

The next day, and the next, he must attend
His foe triumphant, or his bury'd friend.
In ev'ry act and turn of life he feels

Public calamities or household ills;
The due reward to just desert refus'd, 200

The trust betray'd, the nuptial bed abus'd;
The judge corrupt, the long-depending cause,
And doubtful issue of misconstru'd laws;
The crafty turns of a dishonest state,
And violent will of the wrong-doing great; 205

The venom'd tongue, injurious to his fame,
Which nor can wisdom shun nor fair advice reclaim.

Esteem we these, my friend, event and chance,
Produc'd as atoms form their flutt'ring dance?
Or higher yet their essence may we draw 210
From destin'd order and eternal law?

Again, my Muse, the cruel doubt repeat:
Spring they, I say, from accident or fate?
Yet such we find they are, as can control
The servile actions of our wav'ring soul; 215

Can fright, can alter, or can chain the will;
Their ills all built on life, that fundamental ill.

O fatal search! in which the lab'ring mind,
Still press'd with weight of woe, still hopes to find
A shadow of delight, a dream of peace, 220
From years of pain one moment of release;

Hoping, at least, she may herself deceive,
Against experience willing to believe,
Desirous to rejoice, condemn'd to grieve.

Happy the mortal man who now at last 225
Has through this doleful vale of mis'ry past,
Who to his destin'd stage has carry'd on
The tedious load, and laid his burden down;
Whom the cut brass or wounded marble shews
Victor o'er Life, and all her train of woes: 230

He happier yet, who, privileg'd by Fate
To shorter labour and a lighter weight,
Receiv'd but yesterday the gift of breath,
Order'd to-morrow to return to death :
But, O ! beyond description happiest he 235
Who ne'er must roll on life's tumultuous sea :
Who with blest'd freedom from the gen'ral doom
Exempt, must never force the teeming womb,
Nor see the sun, nor sink into the tomb. 239

Who breathes must suffer, and who thinks must
And he alone is blest'd who ne'er was born. [mourn !

“ Yet in thy turn, thou frowning Preacher, hear ;
“ Are not these gen'ral maxims too severe ?
“ Say, cannot pow'r secure its owner's bliss ?
“ And is not wealth the potent fire of peace ? 245
“ Are victors blest'd with fame, or kings with ease ?”

I tell thee, life is but one common care,
And man was born to suffer and to fear.

“ But is no rank, no station, no degree,
“ From this contagious taint of sorrow free ?” 250

None, mortal, none : yet in a bolder strain
Let me this melancholy truth maintain :
But hence, ye worldly and profane, retire,
For I adapt my voice and raise my lyre
To notions not by vulgar ear receiv'd ; 255
Yet still must covet life, and be deceiv'd ;
Your very fear of death shall make you try
To catch the shade of immortality,
Wishing on earth to linger, and to save
Part of its prey from the devouring grave ; 260

To those who may survive ye to bequeath
 Something entire, in spite of time and death ;
 A fancy'd kind of being to retrieve,
 And in a book, or from a building live.

False hope ! vain labour ! let some ages fly, 365

The dome shall moulder, and the volume die.

Wretches, still taught ! still will ye think it strange

That all the parts of this great fabric change,

Quit their high station and primeval frame, 269

And lose their shape, their essence, and their name ?

Reduce the song ; our hopes, our joys, are vain ;
 Our lot is sorrow, and our portion pain.

What pause from woe, what hopes of comfort bring
 The name of wise or great, of judge or king ?

What is a king ? a man condemn'd to bear 275

The public burden of the nation's care :

Now crown'd, some angry faction to appease,

Now falls a victim to the people's ease ;

From the first blooming of his ill-taught youth

Nourish'd in flatt'ry, and estrang'd from truth : 280

At home surrounded by a servile crowd,

Prompt to abuse, and in detraction loud ;

Abroad begirt with men, and swords and spears,

His very state acknowledging his fears ;

Marching amidst a thousand guards, he shews 285

His secret terror of a thousand foes :

In war, however prudent, great, or brave,

To blind events and fickle chance a slave ;

Seeking to settle what for ever flies,

Sure of the toil, uncertain of the prize. 290

But he returns with conquest on his brow,
 Brings up the triumph, and absolves the vow :

The captive gen'als to his car are ty'd ;

The joyful citizens, tumultuous tide,

Echoing his glory, gratify his pride. 295

What is this triumph ? madness, shouts, and noise,

One great collection of the people's voice.

The wretches he brings back, in chains relate

What may to-morrow be the victor's fate.

The spoils and trophies borne before him shew
National loss and epidemic woe,

300

Various distress which he and his may know.

Does he not mourn the valiant thousands slain,

The heroes, once the glory of the plain,

Left in the conflict of the fatal day,

505

Or the wolf's portion, or the vulture's prey?

Does he not weep the laurel which he wears,

Wet with the soldiers' blood and widows' tears?

See where he comes, the darling of the war!

See millions crowding round the gilded car!

310

In the vast joys of this ecstatic hour,

And full fruition of successful pow'r,

One moment and one thought might let him scan

The various turns of life, and fickle state of man.

Are the dire images of sad distrust,

315

And popular change, obscur'd amid the dust

That rises from the victor's rapid wheel?

Can the loud clarion or shrill fife repel

The inward cries of Care? can Nature's voice,

Plaintive, be drown'd, or lessen'd in the noise,

320

Tho' shouts, as thunder loud, afflict the air,

Stun the birds, now releas'd, and shake the iv'ry
chair?

Yon crowd, (he might reflect) yon joyful crowd,

Pleas'd with my honour's, in my praises loud,

325

(Should fleeting vict'ry to the vanquish'd go,

Should she depress my arms and raise the foe)

Would for that foe with equal ardour wait,

At the high palace or the crowded gate,

With restless rage would pull my statues down,

And cast the brass anew to his renown.

330

O impotent desire of worldly sway!

That I who make the triumph of to-day,

May of to-morrow's pomp one part appear,

Ghastly with wounds, and lifeless on the bier!

Then, (vileness of mankind!) then of all these

335

Whom my dilated eye with labour sees,

Would one, alas! repeat me good or great,

Wash my pale body, or bewail my fate?

Or, march'd I chain'd behind the hostile car,
The victor's pastime, and the sport of war, 340
Would one, would one his pitying sorrow lend,
Or be so poor to own he was my friend ?

Avails it then, O Reason, to be wise ?
To see this cruel scene with quicker eyes ?
To know with more distinction to complain, 345
And have superior sense in feeling pain ?

Let us revolve, that roll with strictest eye
Where safe from time distinguish'd actions lie,
And judge if greatness be exempt from pain,
Or pleasure ever may with pow'r remain. 350

Adam, great type, for whom the world was made,
The fairest blessing to his arms convey'd,
A charming wife; and air, and sea, and land,
And all that move therein, to his command
Render'd obedient: say, my pensive Muse, 355
What did these golden promises produce ?

Scarce tasting life he was of joy bereav'd ;
One day I think in Paradise he liv'd,
Destin'd the next his journey to pursue
Where wounding thorns and cursed thistles grew. 360

Ere yet he earns his bread, adown his brow,
Inclin'd to earth, his lab'ring sweat must flow ;
His limbs must ach, with daily toils oppress'd,
Ere long-wish'd night brings necessary rest :
Still viewing with regret his darling Eve, 365
He for her follies and his own must grieve.

Bewailing still afresh their hapless choice,
His ear oft' frighted with the imag'd voice,
Of Heav'n when first it thunder'd, oft' his view,
Aghast, as when the infant lightning flew, 370

And the stern cherub stopp'd the fatal road,
Arm'd with the flames of an avenging God,
His younger son on the polluted ground,
First fruit of death, lies plaintive of a wound
Giv'n by a brother's hand ; his eldest birth 375
Flies, mark'd by Heav'n, a fugitive o'er earth :

Yet why these sorrows heap'd upon the fire,
Becomes nor man nor angel to inquire.

Each age sinn'd on, and guilt advanc'd with time ;
The son still added to the father's crime ;
Till God arose, and, great in anger, said,
Lo ! it repenteth me that man was made.

380

Withdraw thy light, thou Sun ! be dark, ye Skies !
And from your deep abyss, ye Waters, rise !
The frightened angels heard th' Almighty Lord,
And o'er the earth from wrathful viols pour'd
Tempests and storm, obedient to his word.

384

Mean-time his providence to Noah gave
The guard of all that he design'd to save :
Exempt from g'n'ral doom the patriarch stood,
Contemn'd the waves, and triumph'd o'er the flood.

390

The winds fall silent and the waves decrease ;
The dove brings quiet, and the olive peace ;
Yet still his heart does inward sorrow feel,
Which faith alone forbids him to reveal.
If on the backward world his views are cast,
'Tis death diffus'd, and universal waste.

395

Present, (sad prospect !) can he ought descry
But (what affects his melancholy eye)
The beauties of the ancient fabric lost,
In chains of craggy hill, or lengths of dreary coast ?
While to high heav'n his pious breathings turn'd,
Weeping he hop'd, and sacrificing mourn'd ;
When of God's image only eight be found
Snatch'd from the wat'ry grave, and sav'd from na-
tions drown'd ;

400

405

And of three sons, the future hopes of earth,
The seed whence empires must receive their birth,
One he foresees excluded heav'nly grace,
And mark'd with curses fatal to his race.

Abraham, potent prince, the friend of God,
Of human ills must bear the destin'd load,
By blood and battles must his pow'r maintain,
And slay the monarchs ere he rules the plain ;
Must deal just portions of a servile life
To a proud handmaid and a peevish wife ;
Must with the mother leave the weeping son,
In want to wander and in wilds to groan ;

410

415

Must take his other child, his age's hope,
 To trembling Moriam's melancholy top,
 Order'd to drench his knife in filial blood, 420
 Destroy his heir, or disobey his God.

Moses beheld that God ; but how beheld
 The Deity, in radiant beams conceal'd,
 And clouded in a deep abyfs of light !
 While present too severe for human sight, 425
 Nor staying longer than one swift-wing'd night :
 The following days, and months, and years, decreed
 To fierce encounter, and to toilsome deed :
 His youth with wants and hardships must engage,
 Plots and rebellions must disturb his age : 430
 Some Corah still arose, some rebel slave,
 Prompter to sink the state than he to save,
 And Israel did his rage so far provoke,
 That what the Godhead wrote the prophet broke.
 His voice scarce heard, his dictates scarce believ'd,
 In camps, in arms, in pilgrimage, he liv'd, 435
 And dy'd obedient to severest law,
 Forbid to tread the Promis'd land he saw.

My father's life was one long line of care,
 A scene of danger and a state of war. 440
 Alarm'd, expos'd his childhood must engage
 The bear's rough gripe and foaming lion's rage.
 By various turns his threaten'd youth must fear
 Goliath's lifted sword and Saul's emitted spear.
 Forlorn he must, and persecuted, fly, 445
 Climb the steep mountain, in the cavern lie,
 And often ask, and be refus'd to die.

For ever from his manly toils are known
 The weight of pow'r and anguish of a crown. 449
 What tongue can speak the restless monarch's woes,
 When God and Nathan were declar'd his foes ?
 When ev'ry object his offence revil'd,
 The husband murder'd and the wife defil'd, 453
 The parent's sins impress'd upon the dying child !

What heart can think the grief which he sustain'd,
When the King's crime brought vengeance on the
And the inexorable prophet's voice [land,
Give famine, plague, or war, and bid him fix his choice?

He dy'd ; and, oh ! may no reflection shed

Its pois'nous venom on the royal dead :

460

Yet the unwilling truth must be exprest

Which long has labour'd in this pensive breast ;

Dying he added to my weight of care ;

He made me to his crimes undoubted heir ;

Left his unfinish'd murder to his son,

465

And Joab's blood entail'd on Judah's crown.

Young as I was, I hasted to fulfil

The cruel dictates of my parent's will :

Of his fair deeds a distant view I took,

But turn'd the rube upon his faults to look ;

470

Forgot his youth spent in his country's cause,

His care of right, his rev'rence to the laws,

But could with joy his years of folly trace,

Broken and old in Bathsheba's embrace ;

Could follow him where'er he stray'd from good,

475

And cite his sad example, whilst I trod

Paths open to deceit, and track'd with blood.

Soon docile to the secret acts of ill,

With smiles I could betray, with temper kill ;

Soon in a brother could a rival view,

480

Watch all his acts, and all his ways pursue :

In vain for life he to the altar fled ;

Ambition and Revenge have certain speed.

Ev'n there, my soul, ev'n there he should have fell,

But that my int'rest did my rage conceal :

485

Doubling my crime I promise and deceive,

Purpose to slay, whilst swearing to forgive.

Treaties, persuasions, sighs, and tears, are vain ;

With a mean lie curs'd vengeance I sustain,

Join fraud to force, and policy to pow'r,

490

Till of the destin'd fugitive secure,

In solemn state to parricide I rise,

And, as God lives, this day my brother dies.

Be witness to my tears, celestial Muse !
 In vain I would forget, in vain excuse, 495
 Fraternal blood by my direction spilt ;
 In vain on Joab's head transfer the guilt :
 The deed was acted by the subject's hand,
 The sword was pointed by the King's command :
 Mine was the murder ; it was mine alone : 500
 Years of contrition must the crime atone ;
 Nor can my guilty soul expect relief
 But from a long sincerity of grief.

With an imperfect hand and trembling heart,
 Her love of truth superior to her art, 505
 Already the reflecting Muse has trac'd
 The mournful figures of my actions past,
 The pensive goddess has already taught
 How vain is hope, and how vexatious thought ;
 From growing childhood to declining age, 510
 How tedious ev'ry step, how gloomy ev'ry stage.
 This course of vanity almost complete,
 Tir'd in the field of life, I hope retreat
 In the still shades of death ; for dread, and pain,
 And grief, will find their shafts elanc'd in vain, 515
 And their points broke, retorted from the head,
 Safe in the grave, and free among the dead.

Yet tell me, frightened reason ! what is death ?
 Blood only stopp'd, and interrupted breath ?
 The utmost limit of a narrow span, 520
 And end of motion, which with life began ?
 As smoke that rises from the kindling fires
 Is seen this moment, and the next expires ;
 As empty clouds by rising winds are tost,
 Their fleeting forms scarce sooner found than lost, 525
 So vanishes our state, so pass our days.
 So life but opens now, and now decays ;
 The cradle and the tomb, alas ! so nigh,
 To live is scarce distinguish'd from to die.

Cure of the miser's wish and coward's fear, 530
 Death only shews us what we knew was near.
 With courage therefore view the pointed hour,
 Dread not Death's anger, but expect his pow'r,

Nor Nature's law with fruitless sorrow mourn,
But die, O mortal man! for thou wast born. 535

Cautious thro' doubt, by want of courage wise,
To such advice the reas'ner still replies.

Yet measuring all the long continu'd space,
Ev'ry successive day's repeated race,
Since Time first started from his pristine goal, 540

Till he had reach'd that hour wherein my soul
Join'd to my body swell'd the womb, I was
(At least I think so) nothing; must I pass
Again to nothing when this vital breath
Ceasing, consigns me o'er to rest and death? 545

Must the whole man, amazing thought! return
To the cold marble or contracted urn?

And never shall those particles agree

That were in life this individual he?

But sever'd, must they join the gen'ral mass, 550

Thro' other forms and shapes ordain'd to pass,

Nor thought nor image kept of what he was?

Does the great word that gave him sense ordain
That life shall never wake that sense again? 554

And will no pow'r his sinking spirits save [grave?

From the dark caves of death, and chambers of the

Each ev'ning I behold the setting sun

With downward speed into the ocean run;

Yet the same light (pass but some fleeting hours)
Exerts his vigour and renews his pow'rs; 560

Starts the bright race again: his constant flame

Rises and sets, returning still the same.

I mark the various fury of the winds;

These neither seasons guide nor order binds;

They now dilate, and now contract their force; 565

Various their speed, but endless is their course,

From his first fountain and beginning ouze,

Down to the sea each brook and torrent flows;

Tho' fundry drops or leave or swell the stream,

The whole still runs, with equal pace the same; 570

Still other waves supply the rising urns,

And the eternal flood no want of water mourns.

Why then must man obey the sad decree,
 Which subjects neither sun, nor wind, nor sea ?
 A flow'r that does with op'ning morn arise, 575
 And flourishing the day at ev'ning dies ;
 A winged eastern blast, just skimming o'er
 The ocean's brow, and sinking on the shore ;
 A fire, whose flames thro' cracking stubbles fly ;
 A meteor shooting from the summer sky ; 580
 A bowl adown the bending mountain roll'd ;
 A bubble breaking, and a fable told ;
 A noontide shadow, and a midnight dream,
 Are emblems which with semblance apt proclaim
 Our earthly course ; but, O my Soul ! so fast 585
 Must life run off, and death for ever last !

This dark opinion sure is too confin'd,
 Else whence this hope and terror of the mind ?
 Does something still, and somewhere, yet remain,
 Reward or punishment, delight or pain ? 590
 Say, shall our relics second birth receive ?
 Sleep we to wake, and only die to live ?
 When the sad wife has clos'd her husband's eyes,
 And pierc'd the echoing vault with doleful cries,
 Lies the pale corpse not yet entirely dead, 595
 The spirit only from the body fled,
 The grosser part of heat and motion void,
 To be by fire, or worm, or time, destroy'd ;
 The soul, immortal substance, to remain
 Conscious of joy and capable of pain ? 600
 And if her acts have been directed well,
 While with her friendly clay she deign'd to dwell,
 Shall she with safety reach her pristine seat,
 Find her rest endless, and her bliss complete ?
 And while the bury'd man we idly mourn, 605
 Do angels joy to see his better half return ?
 But if she has deform'd this earthly life
 With murd'rous rapine and seditious strife,
 Amaz'd, repuls'd, and by those angels driv'n
 From the ethereal seat and blissful heav'n, 610
 In everlasting darkness must she lie,
 Still more unhappy that she cannot die ?

Amid two seas, on one small point of land,
Weary'd, uncertain, and amaz'd, we stand;
On either side our thoughts incessant turn,
Forward we dread, and looking back we mourn,
Losing the present in this dubious haste,
And lost ourselves betwixt the future and the past.

615

These cruel doubts contending in my breast,

My reason staggering and my hopes oppress,

620

Once more I said, once more I will inquire,

What is this little, agile, pervious fire,

This flatt'ring motion which we call the Mind,

How does she act? and where is she confin'd?

Have we the pow'r to guide her as we please?

625

Whence then those evils that obstruct our ease?

We happiness pursue: we fly from pain;

Yet the pursuit and yet the flight is vain:

And while poor Nature labours to be blest,

By day with pleasure, and by night with rest,

630

Some stronger pow'r eludes our sickly will,

Dashes our rising hope with certain ill,

And makes us, with reflective trouble, see

That all is destin'd which we fancy free.

634

That pow'r superior then which rules our mind,

Is his decree by human pray'r inclin'd?

Will he for sacrifice our sorrows ease!

And can our tears reverse his firm decrees?

Then let religion aid where reason fails,

Throw loads of incense in to turn the scales,

640

And let the silent sanctuary show,

What from the babbling schools we may not know,

How man may shun or bear his destin'd part of woe.

What shall amend, or what absolve our fate?

Anxious we hover in a mediate state

645

Betwixt infinity and nothing; bounds,

Or boundless terms, whose doubtful sense confounds:

Unequal thought, whilst all we apprehend

Is, that our hopes must rise, our sorrows end,

As our Creator deigns to be our friend.

650

I said,—and instant bade the priests prepare

The ritual sacrifice and solemn pray'r.

Select from vulgar herds, with garlands gay,
 A hundred bulls ascend the sacred way:
 The artful youth proceed to form the choir, 655
 They breathe the flute, or strike the vocal wire.
 The maids in comely order next advance,
 They beat the timbrel and instruct the dance:
 Follows the chosen tribe, from Levi sprung,
 Chanting by just return the holy song. 660
 Along the choir in solemn state they pass,
 —The anxious King came last.

The sacred hymn perform'd, my promis'd vow
 I paid, and, bowing at the altar low,
 — Father of heav'n! I said, and Judge of earth! 665
 Whose word call'd out this universe to birth,
 By whose kind pow'r and influencing care
 The various creatures move, and live, and are;
 But ceasing once that care, withdrawn that pow'r,
 They move (alas!) and live, and are no more; 670
 Omniscient Master, omnipresent King,
 To thee, to thee my last distress I bring.

Thou that canst still the raging of the seas,
 Chain up the winds, and bid the tempests cease,
 Redeem my shipwreck'd soul from raging gusts 675
 Of cruel passion and deceitful lusts;
 From storms of rage and dang'rous rocks of pride,
 Let thy strong hand this little vessel guide,
 (It was thy hand that made it) thro' the tide
 Impetuous of this life, let thy command 680
 Direct my course, and bring me safe to land.

If, while this weary'd flesh draws fleeting breath,
 Not satisfy'd with life, afraid of death,
 It haply be thy will that I should know
 Glimpse of delight, or pause from anxious woe, 685
 From now, from instant now, great Sire! dispel
 The clouds that press my soul; from now reveal
 A gracious beam of light; from now inspire
 My tongue to sing, my hand to touch the lyre;
 My open'd thought to joyous prospects raise, 690
 And for thy mercy let me sing thy praise:

Or, if thy will ordains, I still shall wait
Some new hereafter and a future state,
Permit me strength my weight of woe to bear,
And raise my mind superior to my care.

695

Let me, howe'er unable to explain
The secret lab'rins of thy ways to man,
With humble zeal confess thy awful pow'r,
Still weeping hope, and wond'ring, still adore :
So in my conquest be thy might declar'd,
And for thy justice be thy name rever'd.

700

My pray'r scarce ended, a stupendous gloom
Darkens the air ; loud thunder shakes the dome :
To the beginning miracle succeed
An awful silence and religious dread.

705

Sudden breaks forth a more than common day ;
The sacred wood, which on the altar lay
Untouch'd, unlighted glows—

Ambrosial odour, such as never flows
From Arab's gum or the Sabæan rose,
Does round the air evolving scents diffuse :

710

The holy ground is wet with heav'nly dew :
Celestial music (such Jessides' lyre,
Such Miriam's timbrel would in vain require)
Strikes to my thought thro' my admiring ear,
With ecstasy too fine, and pleasure hard to bear :
And, lo ! what sees my ravish'd eye ? what feels
My wond'ring soul ? an op'ning cloud reveals
An heav'nly form embody'd and array'd

715

With robes of light. I heard ; the angel said,

720

Cease, Man, of woman born, to hope relief
From daily trouble and continu'd grief.

Thy hope of joy deliver to the wind :

Suppress thy passions, and prepare thy mind.

Free and familiar with misfortune grow ;

725

Be us'd to sorrow, and inur'd to woe.

By weak'ning toil and hoary age o'ercome,

See thy decrease, and hastening to thy tomb.

Leave to thy children tumult, strife, and war,

Portions of toil, and legacies of care :

730

Send the successive ills thro' ages down,
 And let each weeping father tell his son
 That, deeper struck, and more distinctly griev'd,
 He must augment the sorrows he receiv'd.

The child to whose success thy hope is bound, 735
 Ere thou art scarce interr'd or he is crown'd,

To lust of arbitrary sway inclin'd,
 (That curst poison to the prince's mind !)

Shall from thy dictates and his duty rove,
 And lose his great defence, his people's love : 740

Ill counsell'd, vanquish'd, fugitive, disgrac'd,
 Shall mourn the fame of Jacob's strength effac'd :

Shall sigh the King diminish'd, and the crown

With lessen'd rays descending to his son :

Shall see the wreaths his grandfire knew to reap 745

By active toil and military sweat,

Pining incline their sickly leaves, and shed

Their falling honours from his giddy head :

By arms or pray'r unable to assuage

Domestic horror and intestine rage, 750

Shall from the victor and the vanquish'd fear,

From Israel's arrow and from Judah's spear :

Shall cast his weary'd limbs on Jordan's flood, [blood.

By brothers arms disturb'd, and stain'd with kindred

Hence lab'ring years shall weep their destin'd race,

Charg'd with ill omens, fully'd with disgrace : 756

Time, by necessity compell'd, shall go

Thro' scenes of war, and epochas of woe :

The empire lessen'd, in a parted stream

Shall lose its course— 760

Indulge thy tears ; the Heathen shall blaspheme ;

Judah shall fall, oppress'd by grief and shame,

And men shall from her ruins know her fame.

New Egypts yet and second bonds remain,

A harsher Pharaoh, and a heavier chain. 765

Again, obedient to a dire command,

Thy captive sons shall leave the promis'd land ;

Their name more low, their servitude more vile,

Shall on Euphrates' bank renew the grief of Nile.

These pointed spires that wound the ambient sky,
Inglorious change! shall in destruction lie 771
Low, levell'd with the dust, their heights unknown,
Or measur'd by their ruin. Yonder throne,
For lasting glory built, design'd the seat
Of kings for ever blest, for ever great, 775
Remov'd by the invader's barb'rous hand,
Shall grace his triumph in a foreign land:
The tyrant shall demand yon' sacred load
Of gold and vessels set apart to God,
Then by vile hands to common use debas'd, 780
Shall send them flowing round his drunken feast,
With sacriligious taunt and impious jest.

Twice fourteen ages shall their way complete;
Empires by various turns shall rise and set,
While thy abandon'd tribes shall only know 785
A diff'rent master and a change of woe;
With downcast eyelids, and with looks aghast,
Shall dread the future or bewail the past.
Afflicted Israel shall sit weeping down,
Fast by the streams where Babel's waters run, 790
Their harps upon the neighb'ring willows hung,
Nor joyous hymn encouraging their tongue,
Nor cheerful dance their feet; with toil oppress'd,
Their weary'd limbs aspiring but to rest.
In the reflective stream the sighing bride, 795
Viewing her charms impair'd, abash'd shall hide
Her pensive head, and in her languid face
The bridegroom shall foresee his sickly race,
While pond'rous fetters vex their close embrace
With irksome anguish then your priests shall mourn
Their long-neglected feasts despair'd return. 801
And sad oblivion of their solemn days:
Thenceforth their voices they shall only raise,
Louder to weep. By day your frightened seers
Shall call for fountains to express their tears, 805
And wish their eyes were floods: by night, from dreams
Of opening gulfs, black storms, and raging flames,

Starting amaz'd, shall to the people show
Emblems of heav'nly wrath, and mystic types of
woe.

The captives, as their tyrant shall require 810
That they should breathe the string and touch the lyre,
Shall say, can Jacob's servile race rejoice,
Untun'd the music, and disus'd the voice?
What can we play, (they shall discourse) how sing
In foreign lands, and to a barb'rous king? 815
We and our fathers, from our childhood bred
To watch the cruel victor's eye, to dread
The arbitrary lash, to bend, to grieve,
(Outcast of mortal race) can we conceive
Image of ought delightful, soft, or gay? 820
Alas! when we have toil the longsome day,
The fullest bliss our hearts aspire to know,
Is but some interval from active woe;
In broken rest and startling sleep to mourn,
Till morn the tyrant and the scourge return: 825
Bred up in grief, can pleasure be our theme?
Our endless anguish does not nature claim?
Reason and sorrow are to us the same.
Alas! with wild amazement we require
If idle Folly was not Pleasure's fire? 830
Madness, we fancy, gave an ill-tim'd birth
To grinning Laughter and to frantic Mirth.

This is the series of perpetual woe
Which thou, alas! and thine, are born to know.
Illustrious wretch! repine not nor reply; 835
View not what Heav'n ordains with reason's eye;
Too bright the object is, the distance is too high.
The man who would resolve the work of fate
May limit number and make crooked straight:
Stop thy inquiry, then, and curb thy sense, 840
Nor let dust argue with Omnipotence.
'Tis God who must dispose and man sustain,
Born to endure, forbidden to complain:

Thy sum of life must his decrees fulfil ;
What derogates from his command is ill 845
And that alone is good which centres in his will.

Yet that thy lab'ring senses may not droop,
Lost to delight, and destitute of hope,
Remark what I, God's messenger, aver
From him who neither can deceive nor err. 850

The land, at length redeem'd, shall cease to mourn,
Shall from her sad captivity return :
Sion shall raise her long-dejected head,
And in her courts the law again be read :
Again the glorious temple shall arise, 855

And with new lustre pierce the neighb'ring skies :
The promis'd seat of empire shall again
Cover the mountain and command the plain ;
And from thy race distinguish'd, One shall spring
Greater in act than victor, more than king ; 860
In dignity and pow'r sent down from heav'n
To succour earth. To him, to him, 'tis giv'n
Passion, and care, and anguish, to destroy ;
Thro' him soft peace and plenitude of joy
Perpetual o'er the world redeem'd shall flow ; 865
No more may man inquire or angel know.

Now, Solomon, rememb'ring who thou art,
Act thro' thy remnant life a decent part :
Go forth ; be strong ; with patience and with care
Perform and suffer ; to thyself severe, 870
Gracious to others, thy desires suppress,
Diffus'd thy virtues, first of men, be best.

Thy sum of duty let too words contain,
O may they graven in thy heart remain !
Be humble and be just. The angel said ; 875
With upward speed his agile wings he spread,
Whilst on the holy ground I prostrate lay,
By various doubts impell'd, or to obey
Or to object ; at length (my mournful look
Heav'nward erect) determin'd, thus I spoke : 880

Supreme, all-wise, eternal Potentate !
Sole author, sole disposer, of our fate !

Enthron'd in light and immortality,
Whom no man fully sees, and none can see !
Original of Beings ! Pow'r divine !
Since that I live, and that I think, is thine ;
Benign Creator ! let thy plastic hand
Dispose its own effect : let thy command
Restore, great Father, thy instructed son,
And in my act may thy great will be done.

885

890



ALMA;
OR,
THE PROGRESS OF THE MIND,
IN THREE CANTOS.

Πάντα γέλωσ κὶ πάντα κονίς, κὶ πάντα το μηδέν
Πάντα γὰρ ἐξ ἀλόγων ἐστὶ τὰ γιγνώμενα.
Incert. ap. Stobaeum.

CANTO I.

MATTHEW met Richard, when or where
From story is not mighty clear :
Of many knotty points they spoke,
And *pro* and *con* by turns they took :
Rats half the manuscript have ate ; 5
Dire hunger ! which we still regret ;
O ! may they ne'er again digest
The horrors of so sad a feast ;
Yet less our grief, if what remains,
Dear Jacob, by thy care and pains 10
Shall be to future times convey'd :
It thus begins :
**** Here Matthew said,
Alma in verse, in prose, the mind,
By Aristotle's pen defin'd, 15
Throughout the body squat or tall,
Is *bonâ fide*, all in all :
And yet, slapdash, is all again
In ev'ry sinew, nerve, and vein ;
Runs here and there, like Hamlet's ghost, 20
While ev'ry where she rules the roast.
This system, Richard, we are told
The men of Oxford firmly hold :
The Cambridge wits, you know, deny
With *ipse dixit* to comply : 25

They say, (for in good truth they speak
 With small respect of that old Greek)
 That, putting all his words together,
 'Tis three blue beans in one blue bladder.

Alma, they strenuously maintain,
 Sits cock-horse on her throne, the brain,
 And from that seat of thought dispenses
 Her sov'reign pleasure to the senses.
 Two optic nerves, they say, she ties,
 Like spectacle across the eyes,
 By which the spirits bring her word
 Whene'er the balls are fix'd or stir'd ;
 How quick at Park and play they strike ;
 The duke they court; the toast they like ;
 And at St. James's turn their grace
 From former friends, now out of place.

Without these aids, to be more serious,
 Her pow'r they hold had been precarious ;
 The eyes might have conspir'd her ruin,
 And she not known what they were doing.
 Foolish it had been and unkind
 That they should see and she be blind.

Wise Nature, likewise, they suppose,
 Has drawn two conduits down our nose :
 Could Alma else with judgment tell
 When cabbage stinks or roses smell ?
 Or who would ask for her opinion
 Between an oyster and an onion ?
 For from most bodies, Dick, you know,
 Some little bits ask leave to flow,
 And as thro' these canals they roll,
 Bring up a sample of the whole ;
 Like footmen running before coaches,
 To tell the inn what lord approaches.

By nerves about our palate plac'd,
 She likewise judges of the taste ;
 Else (dismal thought !) our warlike men
 Might drink thick Port for fine Champaign,
 And our ill-judging wives and daughtes,
 Mistake small-beer for citron-waters.

Hence, too, that she might better hear,
She sets a drum at either ear,
And loud or gentle, harsh or sweet,
Are but the alarums which they beat.

Last, to enjoy her sense of feeling,
(A thing she much delights to deal in)
A thousand little nerves she sends
Quite to our toes and fingers' ends,
And these, in gratitude, again
Return their spirits to the brain,
In which their figure being printed,
(As just before I think I hinted)
Alma inform'd can try the case,
As she had been upon the place.

Thus while the judge gives diff'rent journies
To country counsel and attornies,
He on the bench in quiet sits,
Deciding as they bring the writs.
The Pope thus prays and sleeps at Rome,
And very seldom stirs from home,
Yet sending forth his holy spies,
And having heard what they advise,
He rules the church's blest dominions,
And sets men's faith by his opinions.

The scholars of the Stagyrice,
Who for the old opinion fight,
Would make their modern friends confess
The diff'rence but from more or less:
The Mind, say they, while you sustain
To hold her station in the brain,
You grant, at least, she is extended,
Ergo, the whole dispute is ended:
For till to-morrow should you plead,
From form and structure of the head,
The Mind as visibly is seen
Extended thro' the whole machine.
Why should all honour then be ta'en
From lower parts to load the brain,
When other limbs we plainly see
Each in his way as brisk as he?

For music, grant the head receives it,
 It is the artist's hand that gives it:
 And tho' the skull may wear the laurel,
 The soldier's arm sustains the quarrel.
 Besides, the nostrils, ears, and eyes,
 Are not his parts, but his allies:
 E'en what you hear the tongue proclaim,
 Comes *ab origine* from them.

What could the head perform alone
 If all their friendly aids were gone?
 A foolish figure we must make,
 Do nothing else but sleep and ake.

Nor matters it that you can show
 How to the head the spirits go;
 Those spirits started from some goal
 Before they thro' the veins could roll;
 Now we should hold them much to blame
 If they went back before they came.

If, therefore, as we must suppose,
 They came from fingers and from toes,
 Or toes or fingers, in this case,
 Of numskull's self should take the place;
 Disputing fair you grant this much,
 That all sensation is but touch.

Dip but your toes into cold water,
 Their correspondent teeth will chatter:
 And strike the bottom of your feet,
 You set your head into a heat.
 The bully beat, and happy lover,
 Confess that feeling lies all over.

Note here, Lucretius dares to teach
 (As all our youth may learn from Creech)
 That eyes were made, but could not view,
 Nor hands embrace, nor feet pursue,
 But heedless Nature did produce
 The members first, and then the use:
 What each must act was yet unknown,
 Till all is mov'd by Chance alone.

A man first builds a country-seat,
 Then finds the walls not good to eat.

Another plants, and wond'ring, fees
Nor books nor medals on his trees,
Yet poet and philosopher
Was he who durst such whims aver.
Blest for his sake be human reason,
That came at all, tho' late, in season. 150

But no man sure e'er left his house,
And saddled Ball, with thoughts so wild
To bring a midwife to his spouse
Before he knew she was with child : 155
And no man ever reapt his corn,
Or from the oven drew his bread,
Ere hinds and bakers yet were born,
That taught them both to sow and knead.
Before they're ask'd can maids refuse? 160
Can—Pray, says Dick, hold in your Muse,
While you Pindaric truths rehearse,
She hobbles in alternate verse.

Verse! Matt. reply'd; is that my care?
Go on, quoth Richard, soft and fair. 165

This looks, friend Dick, as Nature had
But exercis'd the salesman's trade;
As if she haply had sat down
And cut out clothes for all the Town,
Then sent them out to Monmouth street 170
To try what persons they would fit;
But ev'ry free and licens'd tailor
Would in this thesis find a failure.
Should whims like these his head perplex,
How could he work for either sex! 175
His clothes as atoms might prevail,
Might fit a pismire or a whale.

No, no: he views with studious pleasure
Your shape before he takes your measure:
For real Kate he made the bodice, 180
And not for an ideal goddess.

No error near his shopboard lurk'd;
He knew the folks for whom he work'd:
Still to their size he aim'd his skill,
Else pray thee who would pay his bill? 185

Next, Dick, if Chance herself should vary,
Observe how matter would miscarry :
Across your eyes, Friend, place your shoes,
Your spectacles upon your toes,
Then you and Memmius shall agree
How nicely men would walk or see.

190

But wisdom, peevish, and cross-grain'd
Must be oppos'd to be sustain'd ;
And still your knowledge will increase,
As you make other people's less.

195

In arms and science 'tis the same ;
Our rival's hurts create our fame.
At Faubert's, if disputes arise
Among the champions for the prize,
To prove who gave the fairer butt,
John shows the chalk on Robert's coat.
So for the honour of your book,
It tells where other folks mistook,
And as their notions you confound,
Those you invent get farther ground.

200

205

The commentators on old Ari-
Stotle ('tis urg'd) in judgment vary :
They to their own conceits have brought
The image of his general thought,
Just as the melancholic eye
Sees fleets and armies in the sky,
And to the poor apprentice ear
The bells sound Whittington Lord May'r.
The conj'rer thus explains his scheme ;
Thus spirits walk and prophets dream ;
North Britons thus have second fight,
And Germans free from gunshot fight.

210

215

Theodoret and Origen,
And fifty other learned men,
Attest that if their comments find
The traces of their master's mind,
Alma can ne'er decay nor die :
This flatly th' other sect deny,
Simplicius, Theophrast, Durand,
Great names, but hard in verse to stand :

220

225

They wonder men should have mistook
The tenets of their master's book,
And hold that Alma yields her breath,
O'ercome by age and seiz'd by death.
Now which were wise, and which were fools? 230
Poor Alma sits between two stools;
The more she reads the more perplext,
The comment ruining the text:
Now fears, now hopes her doubtful fate:
But, Richard, let her look to that— 235
Whilst we our own affairs pursue.

These diff'rent systems old or new,
A man with half an eye may see
Were only form'd to disagree.
Now to bring things to fair conclusion, 240
And save much Christian ink's effusion,
Let me propose an healing scheme,
And sail along the middle stream;
For, Dick, if we could reconcile
Old Aristotle with Gassendus, 245
How many would admire our toil,
And yet how few would comprehend us?

Here, Richard, let my scheme commence:
Oh! may my words be lost in sense,
While pleas'd Thalia deigns to write 250
The slips and bounds of Alma's flight.

My simple system shall suppose
That Alma enters at the toes;
That then she mounts, by just degrees,
Up to the ancles, legs, and knees: 255
Next as the sap of life does rise,
She lends her vigour to the thighs;
And, all these under regions past,
She nestles somewhere near the waist;
Gives pain or pleasure, grief or laughter, 260
As we shall show at large hereafter:
Mature, if not improv'd by time,
Up to the heart she loves to climb:
From thence, compell'd by craft and age,
She makes the head her latest stage. 265

From the feet upward to the head,
Pithy, and short, says Dick, proceed.

Dick, this is not an idle notion ;
Observe the progress of the motion :

First, I demonstratively prove

270

That feet were only made to move,

And legs desire to come and go,

For they have nothing else to do.

Hence, long before the child can crawl,

He learns to kick, and wince, and sprawl,

275

To hinder which, your midwife knows

To bind those parts extremely close,

Left Alma, newly enter'd in,

And stunn'd at her own christ'ning's din,

Fearful of future grief and pain,

280

Should silently sneak out again.

Full piteous seems young Alma's case,

As in a luckless gamester's place,

She would not play, yet must not pass.

Again, as she grows something stronger,

285

And master's feet are swath'd no longer,

If in the night too oft he kicks,

Or shows his *loco-motive* tricks,

These first assaults fat Kate repays him,

When half-asleep she overlays him.

290

Now mark, dear Richard, from the age

That children tread this worldly stage,

Broomstaff or poker they bestride,

And round the parlour love to ride,

Till thoughtful father's pious care

295

Provides his brood, next Smithfield fair,

With supplemental hobby-horses,

And happy be their infant courses !

Hence for some years they ne'er stand still ;

Their legs you see direct their will ;

300

From op'ning morn till setting sun

Around the fields and woods they run,

They frisk, and dance, and leap, and play,

Nor heed what Friend or Snake can say ;

To her next stage as Alma flies,
And likes, as I have said, the thighs,
With sympathetic pow'r she warms
Their good allies and friends the arms;
While Betty dances on the green,
And Susan is at stoolball seen;
While John for ninepins does declare,
And Roger loves to pitch the bar,
Both legs and arms spontaneous move,
Which was the thing I meant to prove.

310

Another motion now she makes:

315

O need I name the seat she takes?

His thought quite chang'd the stripling finds;

The sport and race no more he minds;

Neglected Tray and Pointer lie,

And covies unmolested fly:

320

Sudden the jocund plain he leaves,

And for the nymph in secret grieves:

In dying accents he complains

Of cruel fires and raging pains.

The nymph, too, longs to be alone,

325

Leaves all the swains and sighs for one:

The nymph is warm'd with young desire,

And feels, and dies to quench his fire.

They meet each ev'ning in the grove;

Their parley but augments their love:

330

So to the priest their case they tell;

He ties the knot, and all goes well.

But, O my Muse, just distance keep,

Thou art a maid, and must not peep.

In nine months time the bodice loose,

335

And petticoats too short, disclose

That at this age the active mind

About the waist lies most confin'd,

And that young life, and quick'ning sense

Spring from his influence darted thence:

340

So from the middle of the world

The sun's prolific rays are hurl'd;

'Tis from that seat he darts those beams

Which quicken earth with genial flames.

Dick, who thus long had passive sat, 345
 Here strok'd his chin and cock'd his hat,
 Then slapp'd his hand upon the board,
 And thus the youth put in his word.
 Love's advocates, sweet Sir, would find him
 A higher place than you assign'd him. 350
 Love's advocates, Dick, who are those?—
 The poets, you may well suppose.
 I'm sorry, Sir, you have discarded
 The men with whom till now you herded.
 Profemen alone, for private ends, 355
 I thought forsook their ancient friends.
In cor stillavit, cries Lucretius,
 If he may be allow'd to teach us.
 The selfsame thing soft Ovid says,
 (A proper judge in such a case.) 360
 Horace his phrase is *torret jecur*,
 And happy was that curious speaker.
 Here Virgil too has plac'd this passion;
 What signifies too long quotation?
 In ode and epic plain the case is, 365
 That Love holds one of these two places.
 Dick, without passion or reflection,
 I'll straight demolish this objection.
 First, poets, all the world agrees,
 Write half to profit half to please; 370
 Matter and figure they produce,
 For garnish this, and that for use;
 And, in the structure of their feasts,
 They seek to feed and please their guests:
 But one may baulk this good intent, 375
 And take things otherwise than meant.
 Thus, if you dine with my Lord May'r,
 Roast beef and ven'son is your fare,
 Thence you proceed to swan and bustard,
 And persevere in tart and custard: 380
 But tulip-leaves and lemon-peel
 Help only to adorn the meal;
 And painted flags, superb and neat,
 Proclaim you welcome to the treat.

The man of sense his meat devours,
But only smells the peel and flow'rs ;
And he must be an idle dreamer
Who leaves the pie and gnaws the streamer.

385

That Cupid goes with bow and arrows,
And Venus keeps her coach and sparrows,

390

Is all but emblem, to acquaint one
The son is sharp, the mother wanton.

Such images have sometimes shown

A mystic sense, but oft'ner none ;

For who conceives what bards devise,

395

That heav'n is plac'd in Celia's eyes ?

Or where's the sense, direct and moral,

That teeth are pearl, or lips are coral ?

Your Horace owns he various writ,
As wild or sober maggots bit ;

400

And where too much the poet ranted,

The sage philosopher recanted.

His grave Epistles may disprove

The wanton Odes he made to love.

Lucretius keeps a mighty pother

405

With Cupid and his fancy'd mother ;

Calls her great Queen of earth and air,

Declares that winds and seas obey her,

And, while her honour he rehearses,

Implores her to inspire his verses.

410

Yet, free from this poetic madness,

Next page he says, in sober sadness,

That she and all her fellow-gods

Sit idling in their high abodes,

Regardless of this world below,

415

Our health or hanging, weal or woe,

Nor once disturb their heav'nly spirits

With Scapin's cheats, or Cæsar's merits.

Nor e'er can Latin poets prove

Where lies the real seat of Love.

420

Jecur they burn, and *oor* they pierce,

As either best supplies their verse ;

And if folks ask the reason for't,

Say one was long and th' other short.

Thus I presume the British Muse
May take the freedom strangers use. 425
In prose our property is greater?
Why should it then be less in metre?
If Cupid throws a single dart,
We make him wound the lover's heart; 430
But if he takes his bow and quiver,
'Tis sure he must transfix the liver:
For rhyme with reason may dispense,
And sound has right to govern sense.
But let your friends in verse suppose, 435
What ne'er shall be allow'd in prose,
Anatomists can make it clear
The liver minds his own affair,
Kindly supplies our public uses,
And parts and strains the vital juices, 440
Still lays some useful bile aside
To tinge the chyle's insipid tide,
Else we should want both gibe and satire,
And all be burst with pure good-nature:
Now gall is bitter with a witness, 445
And love is all delight and sweetness:
My logic then has lost its aim
If sweet and bitter be the same:
And he methinks is no great scholar
Who can mistake desire for choler. 450
The like may of the heart be said;
Courage and terror there are bred.
All those whose hearts are loose and low
Start if they hear but the tattoo:
And mighty physical their fear is, 455
For soon as noise of combat near is,
Their heart, descending to their breeches,
Must give their stomach cruel twitches:
But heroes who o'ercome or die
Have their hearts hung extremely high, 460
The strings of which, in battle's heat,
Against their very corsets beat,
Keep time with their own trumpet's measure,
And yield 'em most excessive pleasure.

Now, if 'tis chiefly in the heart
That courage does itself exert,
'Twill be prodigious hard to prove
That this is eke the throne of Love.

Would nature make one place the seat
Of fond desire and fell debate?
Must people only take delight in
Those hours when they are tir'd with fighting?
And has no man but who has kill'd
A father, right to get a child?

These notions, then, I think but idle,
And love shall still possess the middle.

This truth more plainly to discover,
Suppose your hero were a lover;
Tho' he before had gall and rage,
Which death or conquest must assuage,
He grows dispirited and low,
He hates the fight and shuns the foe.

In scornful sloth Achilles slept,
And for his wench, like Tallboy, wept,
Nor would return to war and slaughter,
Till they brought back the parson's daughter.

Antoni'us fled from Actium's coast,
Augustus pressing Asia lost:
His sails by Cupid's hand unfurl'd,
To keep the fair he gave the world.
Edward our Fourth, rever'd and crown'd,
Vig'rous in youth, in arms renown'd,
While England's voice and Warwick's care
Design'd him Gallia's beauteous heir,
Chang'd peace and pow'r for rage and wars,
Only to dry one widow's tears.

France's Fourth Henry we may see
A servant to the fair d'Estree;
When quitting Coutras' prosp'rous field,
And Fortune taught at length to yield,
He, from his guards and midnight tent,
Disguis'd, o'er hills and vallies went,
To wanton with the sprightly dame,
And in his pleasure lost his fame.

Bold is the critic who dares prove 505
These heroes were no friends to love ;
And bolder he who dares aver
That they were enemies to war ;
Yet when their thought should, now or never,
Have rais'd their heart or fir'd their liver, 510
Fond Alma to those parts was gone
Which Love more justly calls his own.

Examples I could cite you more,
But be contented with these four ;
For when one's proofs are aptly chosen, 515
Four are as valid as four dozen.
One came from Greece, and one from Rome ;
The other two grew nearer home,
For some in ancient books delight,
Others prefer what moderns write ; 520
Now I should be extremely loath
Not to be thought expert in both. 522



CANTO II.

BUT shall we take the Muse abroad,
To drop her idly on the road,
And leave our subject in the middle,
As Butler did his Bear and Fiddle?
Yet he, consummate master, knew
When to recede and where pursue:
His noble negligence steach
What others toils despair to reach.
He, perfect dancer, climbs the rope,
And balances your fear and hope. 10
If, after some distinguish'd leap,
He drops his pole, and seems to slip,
Straight gath'ring all his active strength,
He rises higher half his length:
With wonder you approve his sleight, 15
And owe your pleasure to your fright:
But like poor Andrew I advance,
False mimic of my master's dance;
Around the cord a while I sprawl,
And thence, tho' low, in earnest fall. 20

My preface tells you I digress'd;
He's half absolv'd who has confess'd.

I like, quoth Dick, your simile,
And in return take two from me.

As masters in the *clare-obscure* 25
With various light your eyes allure,
A flaming yellow here they spread,
Draw off in blue, or change in red;
Yet from these colours oddly mix'd
Your sight upon the whole is fix'd: 30

Or as, again, your courtly dames
(Whose clothes returning birthday claims)
By arts improve the stuffs they vary,
And things are best as most contrary;
The gown with stiff embroid'ry shining, 35
Looks charming with a slighter lining;
The out, if Indian figure stain,
The in-side must be rich and plain:

So you, great authors, have thought fit
To make digression temper wit :
When arguments too fiercely glare,
You calm 'em with a milder air :
To break their points you turn their force,
And furbelow the plain discourse.

Richard, quoth Matt, these words of thine
Speak something sly and something fine ;
But I shall e'en resume my theme,
However thou may'st praise or blame.

As people marry now and settle,
Fierce Love abates his usual mettle ;
Worldly desires and household cares
Disturb the godhead's soft affairs :
So now, as health or temper changes,
In larger compass Alma ranges ;
This day below, the next above,
As light or solid whimsies move.

So merchant has his house in Town,
And country-seat near Bansted Down ;
From one he dates his foreign letters,
Sends out his goods and duns his debtors ;
In th' other, at his hours of leisure,
He smokes his pipe, and take his pleasure.

And now your matrimonial Cupid,
Lash'd on by Time, grows tir'd and stupid :
For story and experience tell us
That man grows cold and woman jealous.

Both would their little ends secure ;
He sighs for freedom, she for pow'r :
His wishes tend abroad to roam,
And her's to domineer at home.

Thus passion flags by slow degrees,
And ruffled more, delighted less,
The busy mind does seldom go
To those once charming seats below ;
But, in the breast encamp'd, prepares
For well-bred feints and future wars.

The man suspects his lady's crying
(When he last autumn lay a-dying)

Was but to gain him to appoint her
By codicil a larger jointure :

80

The woman finds it all a trick
That he could swoon when she was sick,
And knows that in that grief he reckon'd
On black-ey'd Susan for his second.

Thus having strove some tedious years
With feign'd desires and real fears,
And tir'd with answers and replies
Of John affirms, and Martha lies,
Leaving this endless altercation,
The mind affects a higher station.

85

90

Poltis, that gen'rous king of Thrace,
I think was in this very case.

All Asia now was by the ears,
And gods beat up for volunteers
To Greece and Troy, while Poltis fate
In quiet, governing his state.

95

And whence, said the pacific king,
Does all this noise and discord spring ?
Why, Paris took Attrides' wife—
With ease I could compose this strife :

100

The injur'd hero should not lose,
Nor the young lover want, a spouse.
But Helen chang'd her first condition
Without her husband's just permission.
What from the dame can Paris hope ?
She may as well from him elope.

105

Again, How can her old good man
With honour take her back again ?
From hence I logically gather
The woman cannot live with either.

110

Now I have two right honest wives,
For whose possession no man strives :
One to Attrides I will send,
And th' other to my Trojan friend.
Each prince shall thus with honour have
What both so warmly seem to crave ;
The wrath of gods and men shall cease,
And Poltis live and die in peace.

115

Dick, if this story pleaseth thee,
Pray thank Dan Pope, who told it me. 120

Howe'er swift Alma's flight may vary,
(Take this by way of corollary)
Some limbs she finds the very same
In place, and dignity, and name:
These dwell at such convenient distance, 125
That each may give his friend assistance,
Thus he who runs or dances, begs
The equal vigour of two legs;
So much to both does Alma trust
She ne'er regards which goes the first. 130
Teague could make neither of them stay,
When with himself he ran away.

The man who struggles in the fight
Fatigues left arm as well as right;
For whilst one hand exalts the blow, 135
And on the earth extends the foe,
Th' other would take it wondrous ill
If in your pocket he lay still.

And when you shoot, and shut one eye,
You cannot think he would deny 140
To lend the other friendly aid,
Or wink as coward, and afraid.
No, Sir; whilst he withdraws his flame,
His comrade takes the surer aim.

One moment if his beams recede, 145
As soon as e'er the bird is dead,
Op'ning again, he lays his claim
To half the profit, half the fame,
And helps to pocket up the game.
'Tis thus one tradesman slips away 150
To give his partner fairer play.

Some limbs again, in bulk or stature
Unlike, and not a-kin by Nature,
In concert act, like modern friends,
Because one serves the other's ends. 155
The arm thus waits upon the heart,
So quick to take the bully's part,

That one, tho' warm, decides more flow
 Than th' other executes the blow :
 A stander-by may chance to have it 160
 Ere Hack himself perceives he gave it.

The am'rous eyes thus always go
 A-strolling for their friends below ;
 For long before the squire and dame
 Have *tête à tête* reliev'd their flame, 165
 Ere visits yet are brought about,
 The eye by sympathy looks out,
 Knows Florimel, and longs to meet her,
 And if he sees is sure to greet her,
 Tho' at fash-window, on the stairs, 170
 At court, nay, (authors say) at pray'rs—

The fun'ral of some valiant knight
 May give this thing its proper light.
 View his two gauntlets ; these declare
 That both his hands were us'd to war ; 175
 And from his two gilt spurs 'tis learn'd
 His feet were equally concern'd :
 But have you not with thought beheld
 The sword hang dangling o'er his shield ?
 Which shows the breast that plate was us'd to 180
 Had an ally right arm to trust to ;
 And by the peep-holes in his crest,
 Is it not virtually confest
 That there his eye took distant aim,
 And glanc'd respect to that bright dame, 185
 In whose delight his hope was center'd,
 And for whose glove his life he ventur'd ?

Objections to my general system
 May rise, perhaps, and I have mist them ;
 But I can call to my assistance 190
 Proximity (mark that !) and distance ;
 Can prove that all things, on occasion,
 Love union, and desire adhesion !
 That Alma merely is a scale,
 And motives, like the weights, prevail : 195
 If neither side turn down or up,
 With loss or gain, with fear or hope,

The balance always would hang even,
Like Mah'met's tomb, 'twixt earth and heav'n.

This, Richard, is a curious case : 200
Suppose your eyes sent equal rays
Upon two distant pots of ale,
Not knowing which was mild or stale ;
In this sad state your doubtful choice
Would never have the casting voice ; 205
Which best nor worst you could not think,
And die you must for want of drink,
Unless some chance inclines your sight,
Setting one pot in fairer light ;
Then you prefer or A or B, 210
As lines and angles best agree ;
Your sense resolv'd impels your will ;
She guides your hand—So drink your fill.

Have you not seen a baker's maid
Between two equal panniers sway'd ? 215
Her tallies useless lie and idle
If plac'd exactly in the middle ;
But forc'd from this unactive state
By virtue of some casual weight,
On either side you hear 'em clatter, 220
And judge of right and left hand matter.

Now, Richard, this coercive force
Without your choice must take its course.
Great kings to wars are pointed forth
Like loaded needles to the North, 225
And thou and I, by pow'r unseen,
Are barely passive and suck'd in
To Henault's vaults or Celia's chamber,
As straw and paper are by amber.
If we sit down to play or set, 230
(Suppose at Ombre or Basset)
Let people call us cheats or fools,
Our cards and we are equal tools.
We sure in vain the cards condemn :
Ourselves both cut and shuffled them : 235
In vain on Fortune's aid rely ;
She only is a stander-by.

Poor men! poor papers! we and they
Do some impulsive force obey,
And are but play'd with—do not play.
But space and matter we should blame;
They palm'd the trick that lost the game.

240

Thus to save further contradiction
Against what you may think but fiction,
I for attraction, Dick, declare,
Deny it those bold men that dare.

245

As well your mention as your thought
Is all by hidden impulse wrought:
Ev'n saying that you think or walk,
How like a country squire you talk?

250

Mark then;—Where fancy or desire
Collects the beams of vital fire,
Into that limb fair Alma slides,
And there *pro tempore* resides:

She dwells in Nicholini's tongue,
When Pyrrhus chants the heav'nly song:

255

When Pedro does the lute command,
She guides the cunning artist's hand;

Thro' Macer's gullet she runs down,
When the vile glutton dines alone;

260

And, void of modesty and thought,
She follows Bibo's endless draught.

Thro' the soft sex again she ranges,
As youth, caprice, or fashion, changes:

Fair Alma, careless and serene,

265

In Fanny's sprightly eyes is seen,

While they diffuse their infant beams,

Themselves not conscious of their flames.

Again, fair Alma sits confest

On Florimel's experter breast,

270

When she the rising sigh constrains,

And by concealing speaks her pains.

In Cynthia's neck fair Alma glows,

When the vain thing her jewels shows;

When Jenny's stays are newly lac'd

275

Fair Alma plays about her waist;

And when the swelling hoop sustains
The rich brocade, fair Alma deigns
Into that lower space to enter,
Of the large round herself the centre. 280

Again; that single limb or feature
(Such is the cogent force of Nature)
Which most did Alma's passion move,
In the first object of her love,
For ever will be found confest, 285
And printed on the am'rous breast.

O Abelard! ill-fated youth,
Thy tale will justify this truth;
But well I weet thy cruel wrong
Adorns a nobler poet's song, 290
Dan Pope, for thy misfortune griev'd,
With kind concern and skill has weav'd
A filken web, and ne'er shall fade
Its colours gently: as he laid

The mantle o'er thy sad distress, 295
And Venus shall the texture bless.
He o'er the weeping nun has drawn
Such artful folds of sacred lawn,
That Love, with equal grief and pride,
Shall see the crime he strives to hide, 300
And softly drawing back the veil,
The god shall to his vot'ries tell
Each conscious tear, each blushing grace,
That deck'd dear Eloisa's face.

Happy the poet, blest the lays, 305
Which Buckingham has deign'd to praise.

Next, Dick, as youth and habit sways,
A hundred gambols Alma plays.
If, whilst a boy, Jack run from school,
Fond of his hunting-horn and pole, 310
Tho' gout and age his speed detain,
Old John halloos his hounds again:
By his fireside he starts the hare,
And turns her in his wicker chair.
His feet, however lame, you find, 315
Have got the better of his mind.

If, while the Mind was in her leg,
The dance affected nimble Peg,
Old Madge bewitch'd, at sixty-one
Calls for Green Sleeves and Jumping Joan. 320
In public mask or private ball,
From Lincoln's-inn to Goldsmith's-Hall,
All Christmas long away she trudges,
Trips it with 'prentices and judges;
In vain her children urge her stay, 325
And age or palsy bar the way:
But if those images prevail,
Which whilom did affect the tail,
She still reviews the ancient scene,
Forgets the forty years between; 330
Awkwardly gay, and oddly merry,
Her scarf pale pink, her headknot cherry,
O'erheated with ideal rage,
She cheats her son to wed her page.

If Alma, whilst the man was young, 335
Slipp'd up too soon into his tongue,
Pleas'd with his own fantastic skill,
He lets that weapon ne'er lie still:
On any point if you dispute,
Depend upon it he'll confute: 340
Change sides, and you increase your pain,
For he'll confute you back again:
For one may speak with Tully's tongue,
Yet all the while be in the wrong;
And 'tis remarkable that they 345
Talk most who have the least to say.
Your dainty speakers have the curse
To plead bad causes down to worse;
As dames who native beauty want,
Sill uglier look the more they paint. 350

Again: if in the female sex
Alma should on this member fix,
(A cruel and a desp'rate case,
From which Heav'n shield my lovely lass!)
For evermore all care is vain 355
That would bring Alma down again.

As in habitual gout or stone,
 The only thing that can be done
 Is to correct your drink and diet,
 And keep the inward foe in quiet; 360
 So if, for any sins of ours,
 Or our forefathers, higher pow'rs,
 Severe, tho' just, afflict our life,
 With that prime ill, a talking wife,
 Till death shall bring the kind relief, 365
 We must be patient or be deaf.

You know a certain lady, Dick,
 Who saw me when I last was sick;
 She kindly talk'd, at least three hours,
 Of plastic forms and mental pow'rs; 370
 Describ'd our pre-existing station,
 Before this vile terrene creation;
 And, lest I should be weary'd, Madam,
 To cut things short, came down to Adam;
 From whence, as fast as she was able, 375
 She drowns the world, and builds up Babel:
 Thro' Syria, Persia, Greece, she goes,
 And takes the Romans in the close.

But we'll descant on gen'ral Nature;
 This is a system, not a satire, 380

Turn we this globe, and let us see
 How diff'rent nations disagree,
 In what we wear, or eat, and drink;
 Nay, Dick, perhaps in what we think.
 In water as you smell and taste 385
 The soils thro' which it rose and past,
 In Alma's manners you may read
 The place where she was born and bred.

One people from their swaddling-bands
 Releas'd their infants' feet and hands: 390
 Here Alma to these limbs was brought,
 And Sparta's offspring kick'd and fought.

Another taught their babes to talk
 Ere they could yet in go-carts walk:
 There Alma settled in the tongue, 395
 And orators from Athens sprung.

Observe but in these neighb'ring lands
The diff'rent use of mouth and hands:
As men repos'd their various hopes,
In battles these, and those in tropes. 400

In Britain's isles, as Heylin notes,
The ladies trip in petticoats,
Which, for the honour of their nation,
They quit but on some great occasion,
Men there in breeches clad you view; 405
They claim that garment as their due.
In Turkey the reverse appears;
Long coats the haughty husband wears,
And greets his wife with angry speeches,
If she be seen without her breeches. 410

In our fantastic climes the fair
With cleanly powder dry their hair,
And round their lovely breast and head
Fresh flow'rs their mingled odours shed:
Your nicer Hottentots think meet 415
With guts and tripe to deck their feet;
With downcast looks on Totta's legs
The ogling youth most humbly begs
She would not from his hopes remove
At once his breakfast and his love; 420
And if the skittish nymph should fly,
He in a double sense must die.

We simple toasters take delight
To see our women's teeth look white,
And ev'ry faucy ill-bred fellow 425
Sneers at a mouth profoundly yellow.
In China none hold women sweet,
Except their snags are black as jet:
King Chihu put nine queens to death,
Convict on statute, iv'ry teeth. 430

At Tonquin, if a prince should die,
(As Jesuits write, who never lie)
The wife, and counsellor, and priest,
Who serv'd him most, and lov'd him best,
Prepare and light his fun'ral fire, 435
And cheerful on the pile expire.

In Europe 'twould be hard to find
In each degree one half so kind.

Now turn we to the farthest East,
And there observe the gentry drest.
Prince Giolo and his royal sisters,
Scarr'd with ten thousand comely blisters,
The marks remaining on the skin,
To tell the quality within :

Distinguish'd flashes deck the great,
As each excels in birth or state ;
His oylet-holes are more and ampler ;
The king's own body was a sampler.
Happy the climate where the beau
Wears the same suit for use and show ;
And at a small expence your wife,
If once well pink'd, is cloath'd for life.

Westward again, the Indian fair
Is nicely smear'd with fat of bear :
Before you see you smell your toast,
And sweetest she who stinks the most.
The finest sparks and cleanest beaux
Drip from the shoulders to the toes.
How sleek their skins, their joints how easy !
There slovens only are not greasy.

I mention'd diff'rent ways of breeding ;
Begin we in our children's reading,
To Master John the English maid
A hornbook gives of gingerbread,
And that the child may learn the better,
As he can name he eats the letter ;
Proceeding thus with vast delight,
He spells and gnaws from left to right.
But shew a Hebrew's hopeful son
Where we suppose the book begun,
The child would thank you for your kindness,
And read quite backward from our *finis* ;
Devour he learning ne'er so fast,
Great A would be reserv'd the last.
An equal instance of this matter
Is in the manners of a daughter.

In Europe if a harmless maid,
By Nature and by Love betray'd,
Should e'er a wife become a nurse,
Her friends would look on her the worse. 480
In China, Dampier's Travels tell ye,
(Look in his index for Pagelli)
Soon as the British ships unmoor,
And jolly long-boats row to shore,
Down come the nobles of the land, 485
Each brings his daughter in his hand,
Beseeching the mysterious tar
To make her but one hour his care :
The tender mother stands affrighted,
Lest her dear daughter should be flighted, 490
And poor Miss Yaya dreads the shame
Of going back the maid she came.

Observe how custom, Dick, compels
The lady that in Europe dwells ;
After her tea she slips away, 495
And what to do one need not say.
Now see how great Pomonque's queen
Behav'd herself amongst the men ;
Pleas'd with her punch, the gallant soul
First drank, then water'd in the bowl, 500
And sprinkled in the captain's face
The marks of her peculiar grace.—

To close this point we need not roam
For instances so far from home.
What parts gay France from sober Spain ? 505
A little rising rocky chain.
Of men born south or north o' the hill,
Those seldom move, these ne'er stand still.
Dick, you love maps, and may perceive
Rome not far distant from Geneve. 510
If the good Pope remains at home,
He's the first prince in Christendom.
Chuse then, good Pope, at home to stay,
Nor westward, curious, take thy way :
Thy way, unhappy, shouldst thou take 515
From Tiber's bank to Lemman lake,

Thou art an aged priest no more,
But a young flaring painted whore:
Thy sex is lost, thy town is gone:
No longer Rome, but Babylon. 422
That some few leagues should make this change,
To men unlearn'd seems mighty strange.

But need we, friend, insist on this?
Since, in the very Cantons Swiss,
All your philosophers agree, 523
And prove it plain, that one may be
A heretick or true believer,
On this or t' other side the river.

Here, with an artful smile, quoth Dick— 530
Your proofs come mighty full and thick—

The bard, on this extensive chapter,
Wound up into poetic rapture,
Continu'd: Richard, cast your eye
By night upon a winter-sky;
Cast it by day-light on the strand, 535
Which compasses fair Albion's land;
If you can count the stars that glow
Above, or sands that lie below,
Into these common places look,
Which from great authors I have took, 540
And count the proofs I have collected,
To have my writings well protected:
These I lay by for time of need,
And thou may'st at thy leisure read:
For standing ev'ry critic's rage, 545
I safely will, to future age
My system as a gift bequeath,
Victorious over spight and death. 548

CANTO III.

RICHARD, who now was half asleep,
Rous'd, nor would longer silence keep ;
And sense like this, in vocal breath,
Broke from his twofold hedge of teeth.
Now if this phrase too harsh be thought, 5
Pope, tell the world 'tis not my fault.
Old Homer taught us thus to speak ;
If 'tis not sense, at least 'tis Greek.

As folks, quoth Richard, prone to leasing,
Say things at first, because they're pleasing, 10
Then prove what they have once asserted,
Nor care to have their lie deserted,
Till their own dreams at length deceive 'em,
And oft repeating they believe 'em :
Or as again those am'rous blades 15
Who trifle with their mother's maids,
Tho' at the first their wild desire
Was but to quench a present fire,
Yet if the object of their love
Chance by Lucina's aid to prove, 20
They seldom let the bantling roar
In basket at a neighbour's door,
But by the flatt'ring glass of Nature,
Viewing themselves in Cakebread's feature,
With serious thought and care support 25
What only was begun in sport.

Just so with you, my friend, it fares,
Who deal in philosophic wares :
Atoms you cut, and forms you measure,
To gratify your private pleasure, 30
Till airy feeds of casual wit
Do some fantastic birth beget ;
And, pleas'd to find your system mended
Beyond what you at first intended,
The happy whimsey you pursue, 35
Till you at length believe it true :
Caught by your own delusive art,
You fancy first, and then assert.

Quoth Matthew ; Friend, as far as I
 Thro' art or nature cast my eye, 40
 This axiom clearly I discern,
 That one must teach, and t' other learn.
 No fool Pythagoras was thought ;
 Whilst he his weighty doctrines taught,
 He made his list'ning scholars stand, 45
 Their mouth still cover'd with their hand ;
 Else may be some odd-thinking youth,
 Less friend to doctrine than to truth,
 Might have refus'd to let his ears
 Attend the music of the spheres, 50
 Deny'd all transmigrating scenes,
 And introduc'd the use of beans.
 From great Lucretius take his void,
 And all the world is quite destroy'd.
 Deny Descart his subtile matter, 55
 You leave him neither fire nor water.
 How oddly would Sir Isaac look,
 If you, in answer to his book,
 Say, in the front of your discourse,
 That things have no elastic force ? 60
 How could our chymic friends go on,
 To find the philosophic stone,
 If you more pow'rful reasons bring
 To prove that there is no such thing ?
 Your chiefs in sciences and arts 65
 Have great contempt of Alma's parts :
 They find she giddy is or dull,
 She doubts if things are void or full ;
 And who should be presum'd to tell
 What she herself should see or feel ? 70
 She doubts if two and two make four,
 Tho' she has told them twelve times o'er,
 It can't—it may be—and it must :
 To which of these must Alma trust ?
 Nay, further, yet they make her go, 75
 In doubting if she doubts or no.
 Can syllogism set things right ?
 No ; majors soon with minors fight ;

Or, both in friendly consort join'd,
The consequence limps false behind. 80
So to some cunning man she goes,
And asks of him how much she knows;
With patience grave he hears her speak,
And from his short notes gives her back
What from her tale he comprehended; 85
Thus the dispute is wisely ended.

From the account the loser brings,
The conj'rer knows who stole the things.

'Squire, (interrupted Dick) since when
Were you amongst these cunning men? 90

Dear Dick, quoth Matt. let not thy force
Of eloquence spoil my discourse:

I tell thee this is Alma's case.
Still asking what some wise man says,
Who does his mind in words reveal, 95

Which all must grant, tho' few can spell.

You tell your doctor that ye're ill,
And what does he but write a bill?

Of which you need not read one letter:

The worse the scrawl, the dose the better: 100

For if you know but what you take,

Tho' you recover, he must break.

Ideas, farms, and intellects,
Have furnish'd out three diff'rent sects.

Substance or accident divides 105

All Europe into adverse sides.

Now, as engag'd in arms or laws,

You must have friends to back your cause,

In philosophic matters so

Your judgment must with others go: 110

For as in senates so in schools,

Majority of voices rules.

Poor Alma, like a lonely deer,

O'er hills and dales doth doubtful err:

With panting haste and quick surprise, 115

From ev'ry leaf that stirs she flies,

Till, mingled with the neighb'ring herd,

She slight what erst she singly fear'd,

And now exempt from doubt and dread,
 She dares pursue if they dare lead ;
 As their example still prevails,
 She tempts the stream, or leaps the pales.

120

He then, quoth Dick, who by your rule
 Thinks for himself becomes a fool ;
 As party-man who leaves the rest,
 Is call'd but whimsical at best.

125

Now, by your favour, Master Matt.

Like Ralpho, here I smell a rat.

I must be list'd in your sect,

Who, tho' they teach not, can protect.

130

Right Richard, Matt. in triumph cry'd,

So put off all mistrust and pride ;

And while my principles I beg,

Pray answer only with your leg.

Believe what friendly I advise :

135

Be first secure, and then be wise.

The man within the coach that sits,

And to another's skill submits,

Is safer much, (whate'er arrives)

And warmer too, than he that drives.

140

So, Dick, adept, tuck back thy hair,

And I will pour into thy ear

Remarks which none did e'er disclose ;

In smooth pac'd verse, or hobbling prose.

Attend, dear Dick, but don't reply,

145

And thou mayst prove as well as I.

When Alma now in diff'rent ages

Has finish'd her ascending stages,

Into the head at length she gets,

And there in public grandeur sits,

150

To judge of things, and censure wits.

Here, Richard, how could I explain

The various lab'rins of the brain ?

Surprise my readers, whilst I tell 'em

Of *cerebrum* and *cerebellum* ?

155

How could I play the commentator

On *dura* and on *pia mater* ?

Where hot and cold, and dry and wet,
Strive each the other's place to get,
And with incessant toil and strife

160

Would keep possession during life?

I could demonstrate ev'ry pore,

Where Mem'ry lays up all her store,

And to an inch compute the station

'Twixt judgment and imagination.

165

O, Friend! I could display much learning,

At least to men of small discerning.

The brain contains ten thousand cells,

In each some active fancy dwells,

Which always is at work, and framing

170

The sev'ral follies I was naming.

As in a hive's vimineous dome,

Ten thousand bees enjoy their home,

Each does her studious action vary,

To go and come, to fetch and carry;

175

Each still renews her little labour,

Nor jostles her assiduous neighbour:

Each—Whilst this thesis I maintain,

I fancy, Dick, I know thy brain.

O, with the mighty theme affected,

180

Could I but see thy head dissected!

My head, quoth Dick, to serve your whim?

Spare that, and take some other limb.

Sir, in your nice affairs of system,

Wise men propose, but fools assist 'em.

185

Says Matthew, Richard, keep thy head,

And hold thy peace, and I'll proceed.

Proceed? quoth Dick, I do aver

You have already gone too far.

When people once are in the wrong,

Each line they add is much too long.

190

Who safest walks, but walks astray,

Is only furthest from his way.

Bless your conceits, must I believe,

Howe'er absurd, what you conceive,

195

And for your friendship live and die

A Papist in philosophy?

I say, whatever you maintain,
Of Alma in the heart or brain,
The plainest man alive may tell ye 200
Her seat of empire is the belly;
From hence she sends out those supplies
Which make us either stout or wise:
The strength of ev'ry other member
Is founded on your belly-timber: 205
The qualms or raptures of your blood
Rise in proportion to your food;
And if you would improve your thought
You must be fed as well as taught:
Your stomach makes your fabric roll, 210
Just as the bias rules the bowl.
That great Achilles might employ
The strength design'd to ruin Troy,
He din'd on lion's marrow, spread
On toasts of ammunition-bread; 215
But by his mother sent away
Among the Thracian girls to play,
Effeminate he fate, and quiet;
Strange product of a cheesecake diet!
Now give my argument fair play, 220
And take the thing the other way,
The youngster who at nine and three
Drinks with his sisters milk and tea,
From breakfast reads till twelve o'clock,
Burnet and Heylin, Hobbes and Locke; 225
He pays due visits after noon
To Cousin Alice and Uncle John;
At ten, from coffeehouse or play
Returning, finishes the day:
But give him port and potent sack, 230
From milk-sop he starts up Mohack;
Holds that the happy know no hours;
So thro' the street at midnight scours;
Breaks watchmen's heads and chairmen's glasses,
And thence proceeds to nicking fashes, 235
Till by some tougher hand o'ercome,
And first knock'd down, and then led home,

He damns the footman, strikes the maid,
And decently reels up to bed.

Observe the various operations
Of food and drink in several nations,
Was ever Tartar fierce or cruel
Upon the strength of watergruel?
But who shall stand his rage and force,
If first he rides, then eats his horse? 240 345

Sallads, and eggs, and lighter fare,
Tune the Italian spark's guitar:
And, if I take Don Congreve right,
Pudding and beef made Britons fight.

Tokay and coffee cause this work
Between the German and the Turk;
And both, as they provisions want,
Chicane, avoid, retire, and faint. 250

Hunger and thirst, or guns and swords,
Give the same death in diff'rent words. 255
To push this argument no further,
To starve a man in law is murder.

As in a watch's fine machine
Tho' many artful springs are seen,
The added movements, which declare 260
How full the moon, how old the year,
Derive their secondary pow'r
From that which simply points the hour:
For tho' those gimcracks were away,
(Quare would not swear, but Quare would say) 265

However more reduc'd and plain,
The watch would still a watch remain;
But if the horal orbit ceases,
The whole stands still or breaks to pieces;
Is now no longer what it was. 270

And you may e'en go sell the case.
So if unprejudic'd you scan
The goings of this clockwork, Man,
You find a hundred movements made
By fine devices in his head; 275
But 'tis the stomach's solid stroke
That tells his being what's o'clock.

If you take off his rhet'rick trigger,
 He talks no more in mood and figure;
 Or, clog his mathematic wheel,
 His buildings fall, his ship stands still:
 Or, lastly, break his politic weight,
 His voice no longer rules the state:
 Yet if these finer whims were gone,
 Your clock, tho' plain would still go on;
 But spoil the engine of digestion,
 And you entirely change the question.
 Alma's affairs no pow'r can mend;
 The jest, alas! is at an end;
 Soon ceases all this worldly bustle,
 And you consign the corpse to Ruffel.

280

285

290

Now make your Alma come or go,
 From leg to hand, from top to toe,
 Your system, without my addition,
 Is in a very sad condition.

295

So Harlequin extoll'd his horse
 Fit for the war, or road, or course:
 His mouth was soft, his eye was good,
 His foot was sure as ever trod;
 One fault he had, a fault indeed;
 And what was that? the horse was dead.

300

Dick, from these instances and fetches
 Thou mak'st of horses, clocks, and watches,
 Quoth Matt. to me thou seem'st to mean
 That Alma is a mere machine:
 That telling others what's o'clock
 She knows not what herself has struck,
 But leaves to standers-by the trial
 Of what is mark'd upon her dial.

305

Here hold; a blow, good Friend, quoth Dick, 310
 And rais'd his voice exceeding quick,
 Fight fair Sir: what I never meant
 Don't you infer. In argument
 Similes are like songs in love:
 They much describe, they nothing prove. 315
 Matt. who was here a little gravell'd,
 Toss'd up his nose, and would have cavill'd

But calling Hermes to his aid,
Half pleas'd, half angry, thus he said :

Where mind ('tis for the author's fame) 320
That Matthew call'd and Hermes came.

In danger heroes, and in doubt,
Poets find gods to help 'em out.

Friend Richard, I begin to see
That you and I shall scarce agree, 325
Observe how oddly you behave ;

The more I grant the more you crave :

But, comrade, as I said just now,
I should affirm and you allow.

We system-makers can sustain 330

The thesis which you grant was plain,

And with remarks and comments tease ye,

In case the thing before was easy ;

But in a point obscure and dark

We fight as Leibnitz did with Clarke ; 335

And when no reason we can show

Why matters this or that way go,

The shortest way the thing we try,

And what we know not we deny ;

True to our own o'erbearing pride, 340

And false to all the world beside.

That old philosopher grew cross,

Who could not tell what motion was :

Because he walk'd against his will,

He fac'd men down that he stood still 345

And he who reading on the heart

(When all his *quodlibets* of art

Could nor expound its pulse and heat)

Swore he had never felt it beat.

Chrysippus, foil'd by Epicurus, 350

Makes bold (Jove bless him !) to assure us,

That all things which our mind can view

May be at once both false and true ;

And Malbranche has an odd conceit

As ever enter'd Frenchman's pate ; 355

Says he, So little can our mind

Of matter or of spirit find,

That we by guess at least may gather
Something which may be both or neither.
Faith Dick I must conceive 'tis true 360
(But this is only *entre nous*)
That many knotty points there are
Which all discuss but few can clear;
As Nature slyly had thought fit,
For some by-ends to cross-bite wit: 365
Circles to square and cubes to double
Would give a man excessive trouble:
The longitude uncertain roams
In spite of Wh—n and his bombs.
What System Dick has right averr'd 370
The cause why woman has no beard?
Or why, as years our frame attack,
Our hair grows white, our teeth grow black?
In points like these we must agree
Our barber knows as much as we: 375
Yet still unable to explain,
We must persist the best we can;
With care our systems still renew,
And prove things likely, tho' not true.
I could, thou seest, in quaint dispute, 380
By dint of logic, strike thee mute;
With learned skill now push, now parry,
From Darii to Bocardo vary,
And never yield, or what is worst,
Never conclude the point discours'd: 385
Yet that you *hic et nunc* may know
How much you to my candour owe,
I'll from the disputant descend,
To show thee I assume the friend;
I'll take thy notion for my own— 390
(So most philosophers have done)
It makes my system more complete:
Dick, can it have a nobler fate?
Take what thou wilt, said Dick, dear Friend,
But bring thy matters to an end. 395
I find, quoth Matt. reproof is vain,
Who first offend will first complain.

Thou wishest I should make to shore,
Yet still putt'st in thy thwarting oar.

What I have told thee fifty times
In prose, receive for once in rhymes.

400

A huge fat man in country-fair,
Or city-church, (no matter where)
Labour'd and push'd amidst the crowd,
Still bawling out extremely loud,
Lord save us! why do people press!

405

Another, marking his distress,
Friendly reply'd; Plump gentleman,
Get out as fast as e'er you can;
Or cease to push or to exclaim;
You make the very crowd you blame.

410

Says Dick, Your moral does not need
The least return, so e'en proceed:
Your tale, howe'er apply'd, was short:
So far at least I thank you for't.

415

Matt. took his thanks, and in a tone
More magisterial thus went on.

Now Alma settles in the head,
As has before been sung or said:
And here begins this farce of life;
Enter Revenge, Ambition, Strife;
Behold on both sides men advance,
To form in earnest Bays's dance.

420

L'Avre, not using half his store,
Still grumbles that he has no more;
Strikes not the present tun, for fear
The vintage should be bad next year,
And eats to-day with inward sorrow,
And dread of fancy'd want to-morrow.

425

Abroad if the surtout you wear

430

Repels the rigour of the air,

Would you be warmer if at home

You had the fabrick and the loom?

And if two boots kept out the weather

What need you have two hides of leather?

435

Could Pedro, think you, make no trial
Of a sonata on his viol,

Unless he had the total gut,
Whence ev'ry string at first was cut?

When Rarus shows you his Cartone,
He always tells you with a groan
Where two of that same hand were torn
Long before you or he were born.

440

Poor Vento's mind so much is crost,
For part of his Petronius lost,
That he can never take the pains
To understand what yet remains.

445

What toil did honest Curio take,
What strict inquiries did he make,
To get one medal, wanting yet,
And perfect all his Roman set?

450

'Tis found: and O his happy lot!
'Tis bought, lock'd up, and lies forgot:
Of these no more you hear him speak;
He now begins upon the Greek.
These rang'd and shov'd, shall in their turns
Remain obscure as in their urns.

455

My copper lamps at any rate,
For being true antique, I bought,
Yet wisely melted down my plate,
On modern models to be wrought:
And trifles I alike pursue,
Because they're old, because they're new.

460

Dick, I have seen you with delight
For Georgy make a paper kite,
And simple odes, too many, show ye
My servile complaisance to Cloe.
Parents and lovers are decreed
By Nature fools—That's brave indeed!
Quoth Dick; such truths are worth receiving;
Yet still Dick look'd as not believing.

465

470

Now Alma, to divines and prose
I leave thy frauds, and crimes, and woes,
Nor think to-night of thy ill-nature,
But of thy follies, idle creature,
The turns of thy uncertain wing,
And not the malice of thy sting.

375

Thy pride of being great and wise
I do but mention to despise ;
I view with anger and disdain
How little gives thee joy or pain :
A print, a bronze, a flow'r, a root,
A shell, a butterfly, can do't :
Ev'n a romance, a tune, a rhyme,
Help thee to pass the tedious time,
Which else would on thy hand remain ;
Tho' flown it ne'er looks back again :
And cards are dealt, and chess-boards brought,
To ease the pain of coward thought :
Happy result of human wit !
That Alma may herself forget.

480

485

490

Dick, thus we act, and thus we are,
Or tofs'd by hope or sunk by care.
With endless pain this man pursues
What if he gain'd he could not use ;
And th' other fondly hopes to see
What never was nor e'er shall be.
We err by use, go wrong by rules,
In gesture grave, in action fools :
We join hypocrisy to pride,
Doubling the faults we strive to hide,
Or grant that with extreme surprise
We find ourselves at sixty wise,
And twenty pretty things are known,
Of which we can't accomplish one,
Whilst, as my System says, the Mind
Is to these upper rooms confin'd.
Should I, my Friend, at large repeat
Her borrow'd sense, her fond conceit.
The bede-roll of her vicious tricks,
My Poem would be too prolix :
For could I my remarks sustain,
Like Socrates or Miles Montaigne,
Who in these times would read my books,
But Tom o' Stiles or John o' Nokes ?

495

500

505

510

515

At Brentford kings, discreet and wise,
After long thought and grave advice,

Into Lardella's coffin peeping,
Saw nought to cause their mirth or weeping ;
So Alma, now to joy or grief
Superior, finds her late relief ;
Weary'd of being high or great,
And nodding in her chair of state,
Stunn'd and worn out with endless chat,
Of Will did this and Nan said that,
She finds, poor thing, some little crack,
Which Nature forc'd by time must make,
Thro' which she wings her destin'd way ;
Upward she soars and down drops clay ;
While some surviving friend supplies
Hic jacet, and a hundred lies.

O Richard, till that day appears
Which must decide our hopes and fears,
Would Fortune calm her present rage,
And give us playthings for our age ;
Would Clotho wash her hands in milk,
And twist our thread with gold and silk ;
Would she in friendship, peace, and plenty,
Spin out our years to four times twenty ;
And should we both in this condition
Have conquer'd love, and worse ambition ;
(Else those two passions by the way
May chance to show us scurvy play)
Then, Richard, then should we sit down,
Far from the tumult of this town ;
I fond of my well-chosen seat,
My pictures, medals, books complete ;
Or should we mix our friendly talk,
O'ershadow'd in that fav'rite walk
Which thy own hand had whilom planted,
Both pleas'd with all we thought we wanted ;
Yet then, ev'n then, one cross reflection
Would spoil thy grove and my collection :
Thy son and his e'er that may die,
And time some uncouth heir supply,
Who shall for nothing else be known
But spoiling all that thou hast done.

Who set the twigs shall he remember,
That is in haste to fell the timber ;
And what shall of thy woods remain
Except the box that threw the main ? 560

Nay, may not time and death remove
The near relations whom I love ?
And my Coz Tom, or his Coz Mary,
(Who hold the plough or skim the dairy) 565
My fav'rite books and pictures sell
To Smart or Doiley by the ell ?
Kindly throw in a little figure,
And set their price upon the bigger ?
Those who could never read their grammar, 570
When my dear volumes touch the hammer,
May think books best as richest bound :
My copper medals by the pound
May be with learned justice weigh'd ;
To turn the balance, Otho's head 575
May be thrown in ; and for the mettle
The coin may mend a tinker's kettle——

Tir'd with these thoughts—Less tir'd than I,
Quoth Dick, with your philosophy—
That people live and die, I knew 580
An hour ago as well as you ;
And if Fate spins us longer years,
Or is in haste to take the shears,
I know we must both fortunes try,
And bear our evils wet or dry. 585
Yet let the goddess smile or frown,
Bread we shall eat or white or brown,
And in a cottage or a court
Drink fine Champagne or muddled Port.
What need of books these truths to tell, 590
Which folks perceive who cannot spell ?
And must we spectacles apply
To view what hurts our naked eye ?

Sir, if it be your wisdom's aim
To make me merrier than I am, 595
I'll be all night at your devotion——
Come on Friend ; broach the pleasing notion ;

But if you would depress my thought,
Your System is not worth a groat——

For Plato's fancies what care I?

600

I hope you would not have me die,

Like simple Cato in the play,

For any thing that he can say?

E'en let him of ideas speak

To Heathens in his native Greek:

605

If to be sad is to be wise,

I do most heartily despise

Whatever Socrates has said,

Or Tully writ, or Wanley read.

Dear Drift*, to set our matters right,

610

Remove these papers from my sight;

Burn Matt's Descart and Aristotle.

Here, Jonathan, your master's bottle.

613

THE NUT-BROWN MAID.

A POEM.

WRITTEN THREE HUNDRED YEARS SINCE.

BE it right or wrong, these men among

On women do complayne;

Affyrmynge this, how that it is

A labour spent in vaine

To love them wele; for never a dele

5

They love a man againe:

For lete a man do what he can

Ther favour to attayne,

Yet yf a new do them pursue,

Ther furst trew lover than

10

Laboureth for nought; for from her thought

He is a banishyd man.

I say not nay, but that all day

It is bothe writ and sayde

That woman's fayth is as who saythe,

15

All utterly decayed.

* Adrian Drift, Esq. Mr. Prior's secretary and executor.

But nevertheless right good witness
 I' this case might be layde,
 That they love trewe, and continew,
 Record the Nut-brown Mayde ; 20
 Which from her love (whan her to prove
 He came to make his mone)
 Wold not depart, for in her herte
 She lovyd but him alone.

Than betweene us lettens discusse, 25
 What was all the maner
 Between them two: we wyl also
 Telle all the peyne and fere
 That she was in. Now I begynne,
 So that ye me answere. 30

Wherefore all ye that present be
 I pray ye give an eare.

MAN. I am the knyght, I come by nyght
 As secret as I can,
 Saying, alas! thus standeth the case, 35
 I am a banishyd man.

WOM. And I your wylle for to fulfyll
 In this wyl not refuse,
 Trusting to shew, in wordis fewe,
 That men have an ill use, 40
 (To ther own shame) women to blame,
 And causelese them accuse:
 Therefore to you I answere now,
 Alle women to excuse.
 Myn own herte dere, with you what chere, 45
 I pray you telle anone ;
 For in my mynde, of al mankynde,
 I love but you alone.

MAN. It stondeth so ; a dede is do,
 Wherefore moche harm shall growe ; 50
 My desteny is for to-dey
 A shameful deth I trowe ;
 Or ellis to flee : the one must be,
 None other way I knowe,
 But to withdrawe, as an outlawe, 55
 And take me to my bowe.

Wherefore adew, my owne herte trewe,
 None other red I can ;
 For I must to the grene wode goe,
 Alone, a banishyd man.

60

WOM. O Lord ! what is this worldis blyffe,
 That chaungeth as the mone ?
 My somer's day, in lusty May,
 Is derked before the none.

I here you saye farwell: nay, nay,
 We departe not soo sone.

65

Why say ye so? wheder wyl ye goe ?
 Alas ! what have ye done ?

Alle my welfare to sorrow and care
 Shulde chaunge yf ye were gone ;
 For in my mynde, of al mankynde,
 I love but you alone.

70

MAN. I can beleve it shall you greeve,
 And shomwhat you distrayne,
 But aftyrwarde your paynes harde,
 Within a day or tweyne,
 Shal sone aslake, and ye shal take
 Comfort to you agayne.

75

Why shuld ye nought? for to make thought
 Your labur were in vayne,
 And thus I do, and pray you too,
 As hertely as I can ;
 For I muste to the greene wode goe,
 Alone, a banishyd man.

80

WOM. Now sythe that ye have shewed to me
 The secreet of your mynde,
 I shal be plaine to you againe,
 Lyke as ye shal me fynde.

85

Sythe it is so that ye wyl goe,
 I wol not leve behynde :

90

Shal never be sayd the Nut-Brown Mayde
 Was to her love unkynde.

Make you redy, for so am I,
 Altho' it were anone ;

For in my mynd, of all mankynde,
 I love but you alone.

95

MAN. Yet I you rede to take good hede
 What men wyl think and fey ;
 Of yonge and olde it shall be tolde
 That ye be gone away :

100

Your wanton wylle for to fulfyll
 In grene wode you to play ;
 And that ye myght from your delyte
 Noo lenger make delay.

Rather than ye shuld thus for me

105

Be called an ylle woman,
 Yet wold I to the grene wode goe,
 Alone, a banishyd man.

wom. Tho' it be songe of olde and yonge
 That I shuld be to blame,

110

Thers be the charge that speke so large
 In hurting of my name :

For I wyll prove that feythful love
 It is devoyd of shame ;

In your distres and hevyness

115

To parte wyth you the same.

And sure all thoo that doo not so

Trewe lovers are they none ;

But in my mynde of al mankynde,

I love but you alone.

120

MAN. I counsel you, remember how
 It is noo mayden's lawe

Nothing to dought, but to renne out

To wode with an outlawe :

For ye must there in your hand bere

125

O bowe redy to drawe ;

And as a theef, thus must ye lyve,

Ever in drede and awe.

Whereby to you gret harme myght growe ;

Yet I had lever than

130

That I had to the grene wode goe,

Alone a banyshd man.

wom. I think not nay ; but as ye saye,

It is noo mayden's lore ;

But love may make me for your sake,

135

As I have said before,
 To com on fote to hunte and shote,
 To gete us mete in store :
 For so that I your company
 May have, I ask noo more : 140
 From whiche to parte, it makith myn herte
 As colde as ony stone ;
 For in my mynde of al mankynde,
 I love but you alone.

MAN. For an outlawe, this is the lawe, 145
 That men hym take and binde,
 Wythout pytee, hanged to bee,
 And waver with the wynde.
 Yf I had neede, as God forbede,
 What resons coude ye finde ? 150
 For sothe I trowe, ye and your bowe
 Shuld drawe for fere behynde.
 And noo merveyle ; for lytel avayle
 Were in your council than :
 Wherefore I to the wode wyl goe, 155
 Alone, a banishyd man.

WOM. Full well knowe ye that women be
 But febyl for to fyght :
 Noo woman hede it is in deede 160
 To be bold as a knyght :
 Yet in suche fere yf that ye were
 With enemys day and nyght,
 I wolde withstonde wyth bowe in honde
 To greve them as I myght ;
 And you to save as women have 165
 From dethe many one ;
 For in my mynde, of al mankynde,
 I love but you alone.

MAN. Yet take gude hede ! for ever I drede 170
 That ye coude not sustein
 The thorney weyes, the depe valeis,
 The snowe, the frost, the reyn ;
 The cold, the hete : for drye, or wete,
 We must lodge on the playn,

And us above noon other rose,
 But a brake, bush, or twaine,
 Whiche sone shuld greve you, I beleve ;
 And ye wolde gladely than,
 That I had to the grene wode goe,
 Alone, a banishyd man. 180

WOM. Sythe I have here been partynere
 With you of joy and blyffe,
 I must also parte of your woo
 Endure, as reson is :
 Yet am I sure of one pleasure,
 And, shortly, it is this, 185
 That where ye bee, me seemeth, par-dy
 I could not fare amyfs.
 Without more speche I you beseeche
 That we were soon a gone ; 190
 For in my mynde, of al mankynde,
 I love but you alone.

MAN. Yf ye goo thedyr, ye must consyder,
 Whan ye have lust to dyne,
 Ther shal no mete be for to gete, 195
 Nor drink, bere, ale, ne wine ;
 Ne shetis clean, to lye betwene,
 Made of thred and twyne ;
 Noon other house but levys and bowes,
 To kever your head and myn. 200
 O-myn herte swete, this ylle dyet
 Shuld make you pale and wan ;
 Wherefore I to the wode wyl goe,
 Alone, a banishyd man.

WOM. Among the wylde dere, such an archier,
 As men say that ye bee, 206
 We may not fayle of good vitayle,
 Where is so grete plente :
 And watir cleere of the ryvere
 Shal be full swete to me, 210
 With whiche in hele, I shal right wele
 Endure, as ye shal see.
 And er we goe, a bed or two

I can provide anone ;
 For in my mynde, of al mankynde, 215
 I love but you alone.

MAN. Loo ! yet before, ye must do more,
 Yf ye wyl go with me ;
 As cute your here up by you ere,
 Your curtel by the knee : 220
 Wyth bowe in honde, for to wythstonde
 Your enemys yf nede be ;
 And this same nyght, before daylyght,
 To wode-ward wyl I flee.
 And yf ye wylle al this fulfyll, 225
 Do it shortly as ye can ;
 Ellis wyl I to the grene wode goe,
 Alone a banishyd man.

WOM. I shall as now do more for you
 Than longeth to womanhede ; 230
 To short my here, a bow to bere,
 To shote in tyme of nede.
 O my sweet moder, before al other,
 For you have I most drede ;
 But now adew, I must ensue 235
 Where Fortune duth me lede.
 All this make ye, and lete us flee,
 The day run fast upon ;
 For in my mynde, of al mankynde,
 I love but you alone. 240

MAN. Nay, nay, not so : ye shal not goe,
 And I shal telle ye why ;
 Your appetyte is to be light
 Of love I wele espie ;
 For right as ye have sayde to me 245
 In lykewise hardely
 Ye wolde answere, whosoever it were,
 In way of company.
 It is sayd of olde, Sone hote, fone colde,
 And so is a woman ; 250
 Wherefore I to the wode wyl goe,
 Alone a banishyd man.

WOM. Yf ye take hede, yt is noo nede
 Such wordis to fay bee me ;
 For ofte ye prey'd, and longe assay'd, 255
 Er I you lovid, par-dy ;
 And tho' that I of auncestry
 A baron's daughter bee,
 Yet have you prov'd how I you lov'd,
 A squyer of low degree ; 260
 And ever shal, what so befalle,
 To dey therefore anone :
 For in my mynde, of al mankynde,
 I love but you alone.

MAN. A baron's childe to be begyled, 265
 It were a cursed dede :
 To be felawe with an outlawe,
 Almighty God forbede !
 Yt bettyr were the pore squyer
 Alone to forrest spede, 270
 Than ye shal saye another daye,
 That by that wycked dede
 Ye were betrayed. Wherefore good mayde,
 The best rede that I can,
 Is that I to the grene wode goe, 275
 Alone, a banishyd man.

WOM. Whatsoever befalle, I never shale
 Of this thing you upbraid ;
 But yf ye go and leve me so,
 Then have ye me betraid. 280
 Remember ye wele how that ye dele ;
 For yf ye, as ye sayde,
 Be so unkynde to leve behynde
 Your love, the Nut-brown Mayde,
 Trust me truely, that I shal dey 285
 Sone after ye be gone ;
 For in my mynde, of al mankynde,
 I love but you alone.

MAN. Yf that ye went ye shulde repent ;
 For in the forrest now 290
 I have purveid me of a mayde,
 Whom I love more than you.

Another fayrer than e'er ye were,
 I dare it well avowe ;
 And of you bothe eche shulde be wrothe 295
 Wyth other, as I trowe,
 It were myn ese to live in pefe,
 So wyl I yf I can ;
 Wherefore I to the wode wyl goe,
 Alone, a banishyd man. 300

WOM. Tho' in the wode I undirstode
 Ye had a paramour,
 All this may nought remove my thought,
 But that I will be your :
 And she shall fynde me soft and kynde, 305
 And curteis ev'ry hour,
 Glad to fulfyll all that she wylle
 Commaunde me to my pow'r.
 For had ye loo an hundred moo,
 Yet wolde I be that one ; 310
 For in my mynde, of al mankynde,
 I love but you alone.

MAN. Myne own dere love, I see the prove,
 That ye be kynde and trewe ;
 Of mayde and wyfe, in al my lyfe, 315
 The best that ever I knewe
 Be merey and glad, be no more fad,
 The case is chaunged newe ;
 For it were ruthe, that for your trouth,
 Ye shulde have cause to rewe. 320
 Be not dismay'd whatsoever I sayd
 To you whan I began :
 I wyl not to the grene wode goe,
 I am no banishyd man.

WOM. Theis tydingis be more glad to me 325
 Than to be made a quene,
 Yf I were sure they shulde endure ;
 But it is often seene,
 When men wyl breke promyse, they speke
 The wordis on the splene. 330
 Ye shape some wyle, me to begyle,
 And stele fro me, I wene.

Then were the case wurs than it was,
 And I more woo begone ;
 For in my mynde, of al mankynde,
 I love but you alone.

335

MAN. Ye shal not nede further to drede ;

I wyl not disparage

You. God defend, syth you descend
 Of so grete a lynage.

340

Now understante, to Westmerlande,

Whiche is my herytage,

I wyl you bringe, and with a rynge,

By way of maryage,

I wyl you take, and lady make,

345

As shortly as I can.

Thus have ye wone an erlie's sone,

And not a banishyd man.

348

HENRY AND EMMA.

A POEM.

UPON THE MODEL OF

THE NUT-BROWN MAID.

TO CLOE.

THOU, to whose eyes I bend, at whose command
 (Tho' low my voice, tho' artless be my hand)

I take the sprightly reed, and sing and play,

Careless of what the cens'ring world may say ;

Bright Cloe ! object of my constant vow,

5

Wilt thou a while unbend thy serious brow ?

Wilt thou with pleasure hear thy lover's strains,

And with one heavenly smile o'erpay his pains ?

No longer shall the Nut-brown Maid be old,

Tho' since her youth three hundred years have roll'd :

At thy desire she shall again be rais'd,

11

And her reviving charms in lasting verse be prais'd.

No longer man of woman shall complain,

That he may love and not be lov'd again ;

That we in vain the fickle sex pursue, 15
Who change the constant lover for the new.
Whatever has been writ, whatever said
Of female passion feign'd, or faith decay'd,
Henceforth shall in my verse refuted stand,
Be said to winds, or writ upon the sand : 20
And while my notes to future times proclaim
Unconquer'd love and ever-during flame,
O, fairest of the sex, be thou my muse ;
Deign on my work thy influence to diffuse :
Let me partake the blessings I rehearse, 25
And grant me love, the just reward of verse.

As beauty's potent queen with ev'ry grace
That once was Emma's has adorn'd thy face,
And as her son has to my bosom dealt
That constant flame which faithful Henry felt, 30
O let the story with thy life agree,
Let men once more the bright example see ;
What Emma was to him be thou to me :
Nor send me by thy frowns from her I love,
Distant and sad, a banish'd man to rove : 35
But, oh ! with pity long entreated crown
My pains and hopes : and when thou say'st that one
Of all mankind thou lov'st, oh ! think on me alone.

Where beauteous Isis and her husband Thame
With mingled waves for ever flow the same, 40
In times of yore an ancient baron liv'd,
Great gifts bestow'd, and great respect receiv'd.

When dreadful Edward, with successful care
Led his free Britons to the Gallic war,
This Lord had headed his appointed bands, 45
In firm allegiance to his king's commands,
And (all due honours faithfully discharg'd)
Had brought back his paternal coat, enlarg'd
With a new mark, the witness of his toil,
And no inglorious part of foreign spoil. 50

From the loud camp retir'd and noisy court,
In honourable days and rural sport
The remnant of his days he safely past,
Nor found they lagg'd too slow nor flew too fast ;

He made his wish with his estate comply, 55
Joyful to live, yet not afraid to die.

One child he had, a daughter, chaste and fair,
His age's comfort, and his fortune's heir :
They call'd her Emma, for the beauteous dame
Who gave the virgin birth had borne the name ; 60
The name th' indulgent father doubly lov'd,
For in the child the mother's charms improv'd :
Yet as when little, round his knees she play'd,
He call'd her oft in sport his Nut-brown Maid :
The friends and tenants took the fondling word, 65
(As still they please who imitate their lord)
Usage confirm'd what fancy had begun ;
The mutual terms around the lands were known,
And Emma and the Nut-brown Maid were one.

As with her stature still her charms increas'd, 70
Thro' all the isle her beauty was confess'd.
Oh ! what perfections must that virgin share,
Who fairest is esteem'd where all are fair ?
From distant shires repair the noble youth,
And find report for once had lessen'd truth. 75
By wonder first, and then by passion mov'd,
They came, they saw, they marvell'd, and they lov'd.
By public praises and by secret sighs,
Each own'd the general pow'r of Emma's eyes.
In tilts and tournaments the valiant strove 80
By glorious deeds to purchase Emma's love.
In gentle verse the witty told their flame,
And grac'd their choicest songs with Emma's name.
In vain they combated, in vain they writ,
Useless their strength, and impotent their wit : 85
Great Venus only must direct the dart,
Which else will never reach the fair one's heart,
Spite of th' attempt of force and soft effects of art :
Great Venus must prefer the happy one ;
In Henry's cause her favour must be shown, 90
And Emma, of mankind, must love but him alone.

While these in public to the castle came,
And by their grandeur justified their flame,

More secret ways the careful Henry takes ;
 His squires, his arms, and equipage forsakes. 95
 In borrow'd name and false attire array'd,
 Oft he finds means to see the beauteous maid.

When Emma hunts, in huntsman's habit drest,
 Henry on foot pursues the bounding beast ;
 In his right hand his beachen pole he bears, 100
 And graceful at his side his horn he wears.
 Still to the glade where she has bent her way
 With knowing skill he drives the future prey :
 Bids her decline the hill and shun the brake,
 And shews the path her steed may safest take ; 105
 Directs her spear to fix the glorious wound.
 Pleas'd in his toil, to have her triumphs crown'd,
 And blows her praises in no common sound.

A falc'ner Henry is when Emma hawks :
 With her of tarsels and of lures he talks : 110
 Upon his wrist the tow'ring merlin stands,
 Practis'd to rise and stoop at her commands :
 And when superior now the bird has flown,
 And headlong brought the tumbling quarry down,
 With humble rev'rence he accosts the fair, 115
 And with the honour'd feather decks her hair.
 Yet still as from the sportive field she goes,
 His downcast eye reveals his inward woes ;
 And by his look and sorrow is exprest
 A nobler game pursu'd than bird or beast. 120

A shepherd now along the plain he roves,
 And with his jolly pipe delights the groves.
 The neighb'ring swains around the stranger throng,
 Or to admire or emulate his song ;
 While with soft sorrow he renews his lays, 125
 Nor heedful of their envy nor their praise :
 But soon as Emma's eyes adorn the plain,
 His notes he raises to a nobler strain.
 With dutiful respect and studious fear,
 Lest any careless sound offend her ear. 130

A frantic gypsy now the house he haunts,
 And in wild phrases speaks dissembled wants.
 With the fond maids in palmistry he deals ;
 They tell the secret first which he reveals :

Says who shall wed, and who shall be beguil'd ; 135
What groom shall get, and squire maintain, the child ;
But when bright Emma would her fortune know,
A softer look unbends his opening brow :
With trembling awe he gazes on her eye,
And in soft accents forms the kind reply. 140

That she shall prove as fortunate as fair,
And Hymen's choicest gifts are all reserv'd for her.

Now oft had Henry chang'd his sly disguise,
Unmark'd by all but beauteous Emma's eyes ;
Oft had found means alone to see the dame, 145
And at her feet to breathe his am'rous flame ;
And oft the pangs of absence to remove
By letters, soft interpreters of love,
Till time and industry (the mighty two
That bring our wishes nearer to our view) 150
Made him perceive that the inclining fair
Receiv'd his vows with no reluctant ear ;
That Venus had confirm'd her equal reign,
And dealt to Emma's heart a share of Henry's pain.

While Cupid smil'd, by kind occasion bless'd, 155
And with the secret kept the love increas'd,
The am'rous youth frequents the silent groves,
And much he meditates, for much he loves.
He loves, 'tis true, and is belov'd again ;
Great are his joys, but will they long remain ? 160
Emma with smiles receives his present flame,
But, smiling, will she ever be the same ?
Beautiful looks are rul'd by fickle minds,
And summer seas are turn'd by sudden winds :
Another love may gain her easy youth ; 165
Time changes thought, and flatt'ry conquers truth.

O impotent estate of human life !
Where hope and fear maintain eternal strife ;
Where fleeting joy does lasting doubt inspire,
And most we question what we most desire. 170
Amongst thy various gifts, great heav'n, bestow
Our cup of love unmix'd ; forbear to throw
Bitter ingredients in, nor pall the draught
With nauseous grief ; for our ill-judging thought

Hardly enjoys the pleasurable taste,
Or deems it not sincere, or fears it cannot last.

175

With wishes rais'd, with jealousies oppress'd,
(Alternate tyrants of the human breast)

By one great trial he resolves to prove
The faith of woman and the force of love :

180

If, scanning Emma's virtues, he may find
That beauteous frame enclose a steady mind,
He'll fix his hope, of future joy secure,

And live a slave to Hymen's happy pow'r ;

But if the fair one, as he fears, is frail,

185

If pois'd aright in reason's equal scale,

Light fly her merits, and her faults prevail,

His mind he vows to free from am'rous care,

The latent mischief from his heart to tear,

Resume his azure arms, and shine again in war.

190

South of the castle, in a verdant glade,
A spreading beech extends her friendly shade ;
Here oft the nymph his breathing vows had heard ;
Here oft her silence had her heart declar'd.

As active spring awak'd her infant buds,

195

And genial life inform'd the verdant woods,

Henry in knots involving Emma's name,

Had half express'd and half conceal'd his flame

Upon this tree ; and as the tender mark

Grew with the year, and widen'd with the bark,

200

Venus had heard the virgin's soft address,

That, as the wound, the passion might increase.

As potent Nature shed her kindly show'rs,

And deck'd the various mead with opening flow'rs,

Upon this tree the nymph's obliging care

205

Had left a frequent wreath for Henry's hair,

Which as with gay delight the lover found,

Pleas'd with his conquest, with her present crown'd,

Glorious thro' all the plains he oft had gone,

And to each swain the mystic honour shown,

210

The gift still prais'd, the giver still unknown.

His secret note the troubled Henry writes ;

To the known tree the lovely maid invites ;

Imperfect words and dubious terms express
That unforeseen mischance disturb'd his peace ; 215
That he must something to her ear commend,
On which her conduct and his life depend.

Soon as the fair one had the note receiv'd,
The remnant of the day alone she griev'd ;
For diff'rent this from ev'ry former note 220
Which Venus dictated and Henry wrote ;
Which told her all his future hopes were laid
On the dear bosom of his Nut-brown Maid ;
Which always bless'd her eyes and own'd her pow'r,
And bid her oft' adieu, yet added more. 225

Now night advanc'd : the house in sleep were laid,
The nurse experienc'd, and the prying maid ;
And, last, that sprite which does incessant haunt
The lover's steps, the ancient maiden aunt,
To her dear Henry Emma wings her way, 230
With quicken'd pace repairing forc'd delay :
For love, fantastic pow'r that is afraid
To stir abroad till watchfulness be laid,
Undaunted then o'er cliffs and vallies strays,
And leads his vot'ries safe thro' pathless ways. 235
Not Argus with his hundred eyes shall find
Where Cupid goes, tho' he poor guide is blind.

The maiden first arriving, sent her eye
To ask if yet its chief delight were nigh :
With fear and with desire, with joy and pain 240
She sees, and runs to meet him on the plain ;
But, oh ! his steps proclaim no lover's haste ;
On the low ground his fix'd regards are cast ;
His artful bosom heaves dissembled sighs,
And tears suborn'd fall copious from his eyes. 245

With ease, alas ! we credit what we love ;
His painted grief does real sorrow move
In the afflicted fair : adown her cheek
Trickling the genuine tears their current break ?
Attentive stood the mournful nymph ; the man 250
Broke silence first ; the tale alternate ran.

HEN. Sincere, O tell me, hast thou felt a pain,
Emma, beyond what woman knows to feign ?

Has thy uncertain bosom ever strove
 With the first tumults of a real love? 255
 Hast thou now dreaded and now blest his sway,
 By turns averse and joyful to obey?
 Thy virgin softness hast thou e'er bewail'd,
 As reason yielded and as love prevail'd?
 And wept the potent god's resistless dart, 260
 His killing pleasure, his ecstatic smart,
 And heav'nly poison thrilling thro' thy heart?
 If so, with pity view my wretched state,
 At least deplore, and then forget my fate:
 To some more happy knight reserve thy charms, 265
 By Fortune favour'd and successful arms;
 And only as the sun's revolving ray
 Brings back each year this melancholy day,
 Permit one sigh, and set apart one tear
 To an abandon'd exile's endless care. 270
 For me, alas! outcast of human race,
 Love's anger only waits and dire disgrace;
 For, lo! these hands in murder are imbru'd,
 These trembling feet by Justice are pursu'd;
 Fate calls aloud, and hastens me away; 275
 A shameful death attends my longer stay;
 And I this night must fly from thee and love,
 Condemn'd in lonely woods a banish'd man to rove.

EMMA. What is our bliss that changeth with the
 And day of life that darkens ere 'tis noon? [moon,
 What is true passion, if unblest it dies? 281
 And where is Emma's joy if Henry flies?
 If love, alas! be pain, the pain I bear
 No thought can figure, and no tongue declare.
 Ne'er faithful woman felt, nor false one feign'd, 285
 The flames which long have in my bosom reign'd:
 The god of love himself inhabits there,
 With all his rage, and dread, and grief, and care,
 His complement of stores and total war.

O! cease then coldly to suspect my love, 290
 And let my deed at least my faith approve.
 Alas! no youth shall my endearments share,
 Nor day nor night shall interrupt my care;

No future story shall with truth upbraid
The cold indiff'rence of the Nut-brown Maid ; 295
Nor to hard banishment shall Henry run
While careless Emma sleeps on beds of down.
View me resolv'd where'er thou lead'st to go,
Friend to thy pain, and partner of thy woe ;
For I attest fair Venus and her son, 300
That I of all mankind will love but thee alone.

HEN. Let prudence yet obstruct thy vent'rous way,
And take good heed what men will think and say ;
That beauteous Emma vagrant courses took,
Her father's house and civil life forsook ; 305
That full of youthful blood, and fond of man,
She to the woodland with an exile ran.
Reflect, that lessen'd fame is ne'er regain'd,
And virgin-honour once, is always stain'd :
Timely advis'd, the coming evil shun ; 310
Better not do the deed than weep it done :
No penance can absolve our guilty fame,
Nor tears, that wash out sin, can wash out shame :
Then fly the sad effects of desp'rate love, 314
And leave a banish'd man thro' lonely woods to rove.

EMMA. Let Emma's hapless case be falsely told
By the rash young or the ill-natur'd old ;
Let ev'ry tongue its various censures chuse,
Absolve with coldness, or with spite accuse ;
Fair Truth at last her radiant beams will raise, 320
And Malice vanquish'd heightens Virtue's praise.
Let then thy favour but indulge my flight,
O ! let my presence make thy travels light,
And potent Venus shall exalt my name
Above the rumours of censorious Fame ; 325
Nor from that busy demon's restless pow'r
Will ever Emma other grace implore,
Than that this truth should to the world be known,
That I of all mankind have lov'd but thee alone. 329

HEN. But canst thou wield the sword and bend the
With active force repel the sturdy foe ? [bow ?
When the loud tumult speaks the battle nigh,
And winged deaths in whistling arrows fly,

Wilt thou, tho' wounded, yet undaunted stay,
 Perform thy part, and share the dang'rous day? 335
 Then, as thy strength decays, thy heart will fail,
 Thy limbs all trembling, and thy cheeks all pale;
 With fruitless sorrow thou, inglorious Maid,
 Wilt weep thy safety by thy love betray'd;
 Then to thy friend, by foes o'ercharg'd, deny 340
 Thy little useless aid, and coward fly;
 Then wilt thou curse the chance that made thee love
 A banish'd man, condemn'd in lonely woods to rove.

EMMA. With fatal certainty Thalestris knew
 To send the arrow from the twanging yew: 545
 And, great in arms, and foremost in the war,
 Bonduca brandish'd high the British spear.
 Could thirst of vengeance and desire of fame
 Excite the female breast with martial flame?
 And shall not Love's diviner pow'r inspire 350
 More hardy virtue and more gen'rous fire?

Near thee, mistrust not, constant I'll abide,
 And fall or vanquish, fighting by thy side.
 Tho' my inferior strength may not allow
 That I should bear or draw the warrior bow, 355
 With ready hand I will the shaft supply,
 And joy to see thy victor arrows fly.
 Touch'd in the battle by the hostile reed, 368
 Shouldst thou, (but Heav'n avert it!) shouldst thou
 To stop the wounds my finest lawn I'd tear, [bleed,
 Wash them with tears, and wipe them with my hair;
 Blest when my dangers and my toils have shown
 That I, of all mankind, could love but thee alone.

HEN. But canst thou, tender Maid, canst thou sustain
 Afflictive want, or hunger's pressing pain? 365
 Those limbs, in lawn and softest silk array'd,
 From sunbeams guarded, and of winds afraid,
 Can they bear angry Jove? can they resist
 The parching Dogstar and the bleak North-east?
 When, chill'd by adverse snows and beating rain, 370
 We tread with weary steps the longsome plain;
 When with hard toil we seek our ev'ning food,
 Berries and acorns, from the neighb'ring wood,

And find among the cliffs no other house
 But the thin covert of some gather'd boughs, 375
 Wilt thou not then reluctant send thine eye
 Around the dreary waste, and weeping try
 (Tho' then, alas! that trial be too late)
 To find thy father's hospitable gate,
 And seats where Ease and Plenty brooding fate? 380
 Those seats whence, long excluded, thou must mourn;
 That gate for ever barr'd to thy return;
 Wilt thou not then bewail ill-fated love,
 And hate a banish'd man, condemn'd in woods to rove?

EMMA. Thy rise of fortune did I only wed, 385
 From its decline determin'd to recede;
 Did I but purpose to embark with thee
 On the smooth surface of a summer's sea,
 While gentle zephyrs play in prosp'rous gales,
 And Fortune's favour fills the swelling sails, 390
 But would forsake the ship and make the shore,
 When the winds whistle and the tempests roar?
 No, Henry, no: one sacred oath has ty'd
 Our loves; one destiny our life shall guide;
 Nor wild nor deep our common way divide. 395

When from the cave thou risest with the day
 To beat the woods and rouse the bounding prey,
 The cave with moss and branches I'll adorn,
 And cheerful sit to wait my lord's return.
 And when thou frequent bring'st the smitten deer, 400
 (For seldom, archers say, thy arrows err)
 I'll fetch quick fuel from the neighb'ring wood,
 And strike the sparkling flint, and dress the food:
 With humble duty and officious haste
 I'll cull the furthest mead for thy repast; 405
 The choicest herbs I to thy board will bring,
 And draw thy water from the freshest spring:
 And when, at night, with weary toil oppress'd,
 Soft slumbers thou enjoy'st and wholesome rest,
 Watchful I'll guard thee, and with midnight pray'r 410
 Weary the gods to keep thee in their care;
 And joyous ask at morn's returning ray
 If thou hast health, and I may bless the day.

My thoughts shall fix, my latest wish depend 414
 On thee, guide, guardian, kinsman, father, friend :
 By all these sacred names be Henry known
 To Emma's heart; and, grateful, let him own
 That she, of all mankind, could love but him alone.

HEN. Vainly thou tell'st me what the woman's care
 Shall in the wildness of the wood prepare : 420

Thou, ere thou goest, unhappiest of thy kind,
 Must leave the habit and the sex behind.
 No longer shall thy comely tresses break
 In flowing ringlets on thy snowy neck,
 Or sit behind thy head, an ample round, 245

In graceful breeds, with various riband bound ;
 No longer shall the bodice, aptly lac'd
 From thy full bosom to thy slender waist,
 That air and harmony of shape express,
 Fine by degrees, and beautifully less ; 430

Nor shall thy lower garments artful plait,
 From thy fair side dependent to thy feet,
 Arm their chaste beauties with a modest pride,
 And double ev'ry charm they seek to hide.
 Th' ambrosial plenty of thy shining hair 435

Cropt off and lost, scarce lower than thy ear
 Shall stand uncouth ; a horseman's coat shall hide
 Thy taper shape and comeliness of side ;
 The short trunk-hose shall show thy foot and knee
 Licentious, and to common eyesight free ; 440

And with a bolder stride and looser air,
 Mingled with men, a man thou must appear.

Nor solitude, nor gentle peace of mind,
 Mistaken Maid, shalt thou in forests find :
 'Tis long since Cynthia and her train were there, 445

Or guardian gods made innocence their care :
 Vagrants and outlaws shall offend thy view,
 For such must be my friends ; a hideous crew,
 By adverse fortune mix'd in social ill,
 Train'd to assault, and disciplin'd to kill ; 450

Their common loves a lewd abandon'd pack,
 The beadle's lash still flagrant on their back ;
 By sloth corrupted, by disorder fed,
 Made bold by want, and prostitute for bread :



Prior Vide Henry & Emma Vol. Page
An image that the full reflection will
What thou wouldst follow what thou must forgoe
By our all our stars and adverse heaven
To make thee object to thy choice is given
To make thy desire to attain thy love
To make a wounded man condemned in words to love
Designed by J. Flaxman Engraved by G. Kneller
for C. Cooke New York

With such must Emma hunt the tedious day, 455
Assist their violence and divide their prey ;
With such she must return at setting light,
Tho' not partaker, witness of their night.
Thy ear, inur'd to charitable sounds
And pitying love, must feel the hateful wounds 460
Of jest obscene and vulgar ribaldry,
The ill-bred question and the lewd reply ;
Brought by long habitude from bad to worse,
Must hear the frequent oath, the direful curse,
That latest weapon of the wretches' war, 465
And blasphemy, sad comrade of despair.

Now, Emma, now the last reflection make,
What thou wouldst follow, what thou must forsake :
By our ill-omen'd stars and adverse heav'n
No middle object to thy choice is giv'n ; 470
Or yield thy virtue to attain thy love,
Or leave a banish'd man, condemn'd in woods to rove.

EMMA. O grief of heart ! that our unhappy fates
Force thee to suffer what thy honour hates ;
Mix thee amongst the bad, or make thee run 475
Too near the path which Virtue bids thee shun.
Yet with her Henry still let Emma go ;
With him abhor the vice, but share the woe :
And sure my little heart can never err
Amidst the worst if Henry still be there. 480

Our outward act is prompted from within,
And from the sinner's mind proceeds the sin :
By her own choice free Virtue is approv'd,
Nor by the force of outward objects mov'd.
Who has essay'd no danger gains no praise, 485
In a small isle, amidst the widest seas,
Triumphant Constancy has fix'd her seat ;
In vain the Syrens sing, the tempests beat :
Their flatt'ry she rejects, nor fears their threat.

For thee alone these little charms I drest, 490
Condemn'd them or absolv'd them by thy test :
In comely figure rang'd my jewels shone,
Or negligently plac'd for thee alone :
For thee again they shall be laid aside ;
The woman, Henry, shall put off her pride 495

For thee : my clothes, my sex, exchang'd for thee,
 I'll mingle with the people's wretched lee :
 O line extreme of human infamy !
 Wanting the scissors, with these hands I'll tear
 (If that obstructs my flight) this load of hair : 500
 Black foot or yellow walnut shall disgrace
 This little red and white of Emma's face :
 These nails with scratches shall deform my breast,
 Left by my look or colour be exprest 504
 The mark of ought high-born, or ever better drest.
 Yet in this commerce, under this disguise,
 Let me be grateful still to Henry's eyes ;
 Lost to the world, let me to him be known ;
 My fate I can absolve if he shall own
 That, leaving all mankind, I love but him alone. 510

HEN. O wildest thought of an abandon'd mind !
 Name, habit, parents, woman, left behind,
 Ev'n honour dubious, thou preferr'st to go
 Wild to the woods with me. Said Emma so ?
 Or did I dream what Emma never said : 515
 O guilty error ! and O wretched Maid !
 Whose roving fancy would resolve the same
 With him who next should tempt her easy fame,
 And blow with empty words the susceptible flame.
 Now why should doubtful terms thy mind perplex ? 520
 Confess thy frailty and avow the sex :
 No longer loose desire for constant love [rove.

Mistake, but say, 'tis man with whom thou long'st to
 EMMA. Are there not poisons, racks, and flames, and
 That Emma thus must die by Henry's words ; [swords,
 Yet what could swords or poison, racks, or flame,
 But mangle and disjoint this brittle frame !
 More fatal Henry's words, they murder Emma's fame.

And fall these sayings from that gentle tongue,
 Where civil speech and soft persuasion hung ? 530
 Whose artful sweetness and harmonious strain,
 Courting my grace, yet courting it in vain,
 Call'd sighs, and tears, and wishes, to its aid,
 And, whilst it Henry's glowing flame convey'd,
 Still blam'd the coldness of the Nut-brown maid ? 535

Let envious Jealousy and canker'd Spite
 Produce my actions to severest light,
 And tax my open day or secret night.
 Did e'er my tongue speak my unguarded heart
 The least inclin'd to play the wanton's part ? 540
 Did e'er my eye one inward thought reveal,
 Which angels might not hear and virgins tell !
 And hast thou, Henry, in my conduct known
 One fault but that which I must ever own,
 That I, of all mankind, have lov'd but thee alone ?

HEN. Vainly thou talk'st of loving me alone ; 545
 Each man is man, and all our sex is one ;
 False are our words, and fickle is our mind ;
 Nor in Love's ritual can we ever find
 Vows made to last, or promises to bind. 550

By Nature prompted, and for empire made,
 Alike by strength or cunning we invade :
 When arm'd with rage we march against the foe,
 We lift the battle-axe and draw the bow ;
 When fir'd with passion we attack the fair, 555
 Delusive sighs and brittle vows we bear ;
 Our falsehood and our arms have equal use,
 As they our conquest or delight produce.

The foolish heart thou gav'st again receive,
 The only boon departing Love can give. 560
 To be less wretched be no longer true :
 What strives to fly thee why shouldst thou pursue ?
 Forget the present flame, indulge a new :
 Single the loveliest of the am'rous youth ;
 Ask for his vow, but hope not for his truth. 565
 The next man (and the next thou shalt believe)
 Will pawn his gods intending to deceive ;
 Will kneel, implore, persist, o'ercome, and leave.
 Hence let thy Cupid aim his arrows right :
 Be wise and false, shun trouble, seek delight ; 570
 Change thou the first, nor wait thy lover's flight.

Why shouldst thou weep ? let Nature judge our case ;
 I saw thee young and fair ; pursu'd the chase
 Of youth and beauty : I another saw
 Fairer and younger ; yielding to the law 575

Of our all-ruling mother, I pursu'd
 More youth, more beauty. Blest vicissitude!
 My active heart still keeps its pristine flame,
 The object alter'd, the desire the same.

This younger, fairer, pleads her rightful charms,
 With present pow'r compels me to her arms; 581
 And much I fear from my subjected mind,
 (If beauty's force to constant love can bind)
 That years may roll ere in her turn the maid
 Shall weep the fury of my love decay'd, 585
 And weeping follow me, as thou dost now,
 With idle clamours of a broken vow.

Nor can the wildness of thy wishes err,
 So wide to hope that thou may'st live with her:
 Love, well thou know'st, no partnership allows; 590
 Cupid averse, rejects divided vows:
 Then from thy foolish heart, vain maid, remove
 An useless sorrow and an ill-starr'd love,
 And leave me, with the fair, at large in woods to rove.

EMMA. Are we in life thro' one great error led? 595
 Is each man perjur'd, and each nymph betray'd?
 Of the superior sex art thou the worst?
 Am I of mine the most completely curst?
 Yet let me go with thee, and going prove,
 From what I will endure, how much I love. 600

This potent beauty, this triumphant fair,
 This happy object of our diff'rent care,
 Her let me follow; her let me attend,
 A servant: (she may scorn the name of friend)
 What she demands incessant I'll prepare; 605
 I'll wave her garlands, and I'll plait her hair;
 My busy diligence shall deck her board,
 (For there at least I may approach my lord)
 And when her Henry's softer hours advise
 His servant's absence, with dejected eyes 610
 Far I'll recede, and sighs forbid to rise.

Yet, when increasing grief brings slow disease,
 And ebbing life, on terms severe as these,
 Will have its little lamp no longer fed;
 When Henry's mistress shews him Emma dead, 615

Rescue my poor remains from vile neglect :
 With virgin honours let my hearse be deckt,
 And decent emblem ; and, at least, persuade
 This happy nymph that Emma may be laid
 Where thou, dear author of my death, where she 620
 With frequent eye my sepulchre may see.
 The nymph, amidst her joys, may haply breathe
 One pious sigh, reflecting on my death,
 And the sad fate which she may one day prove,
 Who hopes from Henry's vows eternal love. 625
 And thou forsworn, thou cruel, as thou art,
 If Emma's image ever touch'd thy heart,
 Thou sure must give one thought, and drop one tear
 To her whom love abandon'd to despair ;
 To her who dying on the wounded stone, 630
 Bid it in lasting characters be known,
 That of mankind she lov'd but thee alone.

HEN. Hear, solemn Jove, and, conscious Venus, hear ;
 And thou, bright maid, believe me whilst I swear ;
 No time, no change, no future flame, shall move 635
 The well plac'd basis of my lasting love.
 O pow'rful Virtue ! O victorious fair !
 At least excuse a trial too severe ;
 Receive the triumph, and forget the war.

No banish'd man, condemn'd in woods to rove, 640
 Entreats thy pardon, and implores thy love :
 No perjur'd knight desires to quit thy arms,
 Fairest collection of thy sex's charms,
 Crown of my love, and honour of my youth ;
 Henry, thy Henry, with eternal truth, 645
 As thou may'st wish, shall all his life employ,
 And found his glory in his Emma's joy.

In me behold the potent Edgar's heir,
 Illustrious earl : him terrible in war,
 Let Loyre confess, for she has felt his sword, 650
 And trembling fled before the British lord.
 Him great in peace and wealth fair Deva knows,
 For she amidst his spacious meadows flows,
 Inclines her urn upon his fatten'd lands,
 And sees his num'rous herds imprint her sands. 655

And thou, my fair, my dove, shalt raise thy thought
To greatness next to empire ; shalt be brought
With solemn pomp to my paternal seat,
Where peace and plenty on thy word shall wait :
Music and song shall wake the marriage day, 660
And while the priests accuse the bride's delay,
Myrtles and roses shall obstruct her way.

Friendship shall still thy ev'ning feasts adorn,
And blooming Peace shall ever bless thy morn ,
Succeeding years their happy race shall run, 665
And Age unheeded by delight come on,
While yet superior love shall mock his pow'r ;
And when old Time shall turn the fated hour,
Which only can our well-ty'd knot unfold,
What rests of both one sepulchre shall hold. 670

Hence, then, for ever, from my Emma's breast
(That heav'n of softness and that seat of rest)
Ye doubts and fears, and all that know to move
Tormenting grief, and all that trouble love ;
Scatter'd by winds recede, and wild in forests rove. 675

EMMA. O day, the fairest sure that ever rose !
Period and end of anxious Emma's woes !
Sire of her joy, and source of her delight,
O ! wing'd with pleasure take thy happy flight,
And give each future morn a ticture of thy white.
Yet tell thy vot'ry, potent queen of love, 681
Henry, my Henry, will he never rove ?
Will he be ever kind, and just, and good ?
And is there yet no mistress in the wood ?
None, none there is : the thought was rash and vain,
A false idea, and a fancy'd pain, 686
Doubt shall for ever quit my strengthen'd heart,
And anxious Jealousy's corroding smart ;
Nor other inmate shall inhabit there,
But soft Belief, young Joy, and pleasing Care. 690

Hence let the tides of plenty ebb and flow,
And Fortune's various gale unheeded blow.
If at my feet the suppliant goddess stands,
And sheds her treasure with unweary'd hands,
Her present favour cautious I'll embrace, 695
And not unthankful use the proffer'd grace;

If she reclaims the temporary boon,
 And tries her pinions, flutt'ring to be gone,
 Secure of mind I'll obviate her intent,
 And unconcern'd return the goods she lent. 700
 Nor happiness can I, nor misery, feel,
 From any turn of her fantastic wheel:
 Friendship's great laws and love's superior pow'rs,
 Must mark the colour of my future hours.
 From the events which thy commands create 705
 I must my blessings or my sorrows date,
 And Henry's will must dictate Emma's fate.

Yet, while with close delight and inward pride
 (Which from the world my careful soul shall hide)
 I see thee, lord and end of my desire, 710
 Exalted high as virtue can require,
 With pow'r invested, and with pleasure cheer'd,
 Sought by the good, by the oppressor fear'd,
 Loaded and blest with all the affluent store!
 Which human vows at smoking shrines implore; 715
 Grateful and humble grant me to employ
 My life subservient only to thy joy,
 And at my death to bless thy kindness, shown
 To her who, of mankind, could love but thee alone.

WHILE thus the constant pair alternate said, 720
 Joyful above them and around them play'd
 Angels and sportive loves, a num'rous crowd:
 Smiling they clapt their wings, and low they bow'd:
 They tumbled all their little quivers o'er,
 To chuse propitious shafts a precious store, 725
 That when their god should take his future darts,
 To strike, (however rarely) constant hearts,
 His happy skill might proper arms employ,
 All tipt with pleasure, and all wing'd with joy;
 And those, they vow'd, whose lives should imitate 730
 These lovers' constancy, should share their fate.

The queen of beauty stopp'd her bridled doves,
 Approv'd the little labour of the loves:
 Was proud and pleas'd the mutual vow to hear,
 And to the triumph call'd the god of war: 735
 Soon as she calls, the god is always near.

Now Mars, she said, let Fame exalt her voice,
 Nor let thy conquests only be her choice,
 But when she sings, great Edward from the field
 Return'd, the hostile spear and captive shield 740
 In Concord's temple hung, and Gallia taught to yield.
 And when, as prudent Saturn shall complete
 The years design'd to perfect Britain's state,
 The swift-wing'd pow'r shall take her trump again,
 To sing her fav'rite Anna's wondrous reign, 745
 To recollect unweary'd Malbro's toils,
 Old Rufus' Hall unequal to his spoils,
 The British soldier from his high command
 Glorious, and Gaul thrice vanquish'd by his hand,
 Let her at least perform what I desire, 750
 With second breath the vocal brass inspire,
 And tell the nations in no vulgar strain,
 What wars I manage, and what wreaths I gain.
 And when thy tumults and thy fights are past,
 And when thy laurels at my feet are cast; 755
 Faithful may'st thou, like British Henry prove,
 And Emma-like let me return thy love.

Renown'd for truth let all thy sons appear,
 And constant beauty shall reward their care.

Mars smil'd, and bow'd: the Cyprian deity 760
 Turn'd to the glorious ruler of the sky;
 And thou, she smiling said, great god of days
 And verse, behold my deed and sing my praise;
 As on the British earth, my fav'rite isle,
 Thy gentle rays and kindest influence smile, 765
 Thro' all her laughing fields and verdant groves,
 Proclaim with joy these memorable loves:
 From ev'ry annual course let one great day
 To celebrated sports and floral play
 Be set aside; and in the softest lays 770
 Of thy poetic sons, be solemn praise
 And everlasting marks of honour paid
 To the true lover and the Nut-brown Maid. 773

THE END.

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